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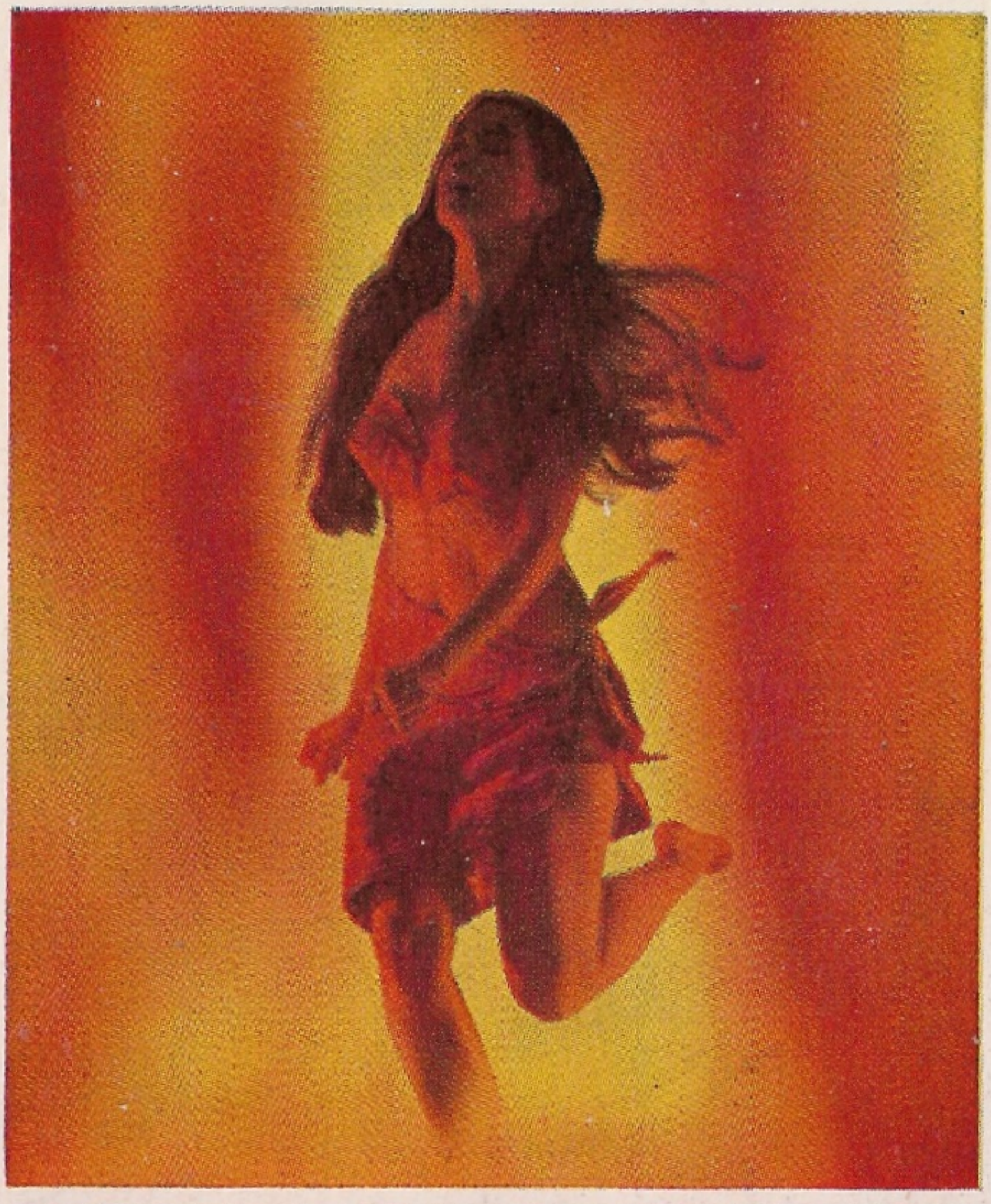

EDITED BY MARTIN EBON

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TRUE EXPERIENCES IN EXOTIC ESP

Edited by

MARTIN EBON

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TRUE
EXPERIENCES IN EXOTIC ESP

We Are All Exotic

I have witnessed firewalking in Macedonia, trance dances on the island of Bali and ghost excorcism in the Pennsylvania Dutch countryside. For well over a decade, as an administrator and editor of the Parapsychology Foundation and its publications, I found the unusual, the awesome—and at times the frightening—to be all in a day's work. Foremost among the striking impressions that remain, is the similarity between the practices of so-called "primitive" peoples and the hidden phenomena within our own industrialized civilization. With all our space-age sophistication, most of us differ only in degree from Stone Age man—with whom we can shake hands, right now, in New Guinea—or the inhabitants of a Tibetan or Nigerian village.

But when you see instant healing, or apparently magical feats by a witch doctor, when you hear apparently incontrovertible evidence of a tribal death-by-telepathy—just where does imagination end and reality begin? This borderline eludes us. Whether we are Amazonian Indians, North African Berbers, Eskimos, or Swiss peasants, there is within us the strong desire to be the favored children of a kindly fate; that is why, within the area of wish fulfillment that links religion with magic, the same themes recur—food, love, health, knowledge. To gain these, we seek the favors of gods or ghosts, ancestors or nature spirits, and of knowledgeable holy men or witch doctors (from the houngans of Haiti to the shamans of Siberia). Each civilization, in accordance with its needs, defines the targets for its magic—and, if we can trust the witnesses, achieves them.

The stories on the following pages come from the magazine *Tomorrow,* of which I was managing editor; they link anthropology with the controversial science of parapsychology. The anthropologist studies man, often "primitive" man and his traditions and practices. The parapsychologist seeks to document phenomena that happen to man through apparent extrasensory perception (ESP). But the magical phenomenon (healing, spirit intercession, thought transmission at a distance, prophecy, etc.) usually happens at a time when or place where the modern tools of the observer—his motion picture camera or tape recorder—are not readily at hand. All the traveling scholar can do is record the stories told by witnesses who may be more or less reliable.

One veteran parapsychologist, Dr. Louisa Rhine of the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man, Durham, North Carolina, feels that parapsychological case histories are only as good as human testimony itself; even the best of them permit only the conclusion that "this *could* have been an instance of ESP, not this *was* an instance." In her book *ESP in Life and Lab* (New York, 1967), the wife of the well-known Dr. J. B. Rhine notes that laboratory experiments are necessary to add the required statistical reliability that is missing in the nonlaboratory case history.

One husband-and-wife team of parapsychologists has done pioneer work in this field: Ronald and Lyndon Rose of Australia have not only visited the aborigines of their own country, but also of New Zealand and Samoa, where they collected case histories of paranormal happenings and engaged in laboratory-type tests as well. In their book *Living Magic* (Chicago, 1956), they describe the close relationship, in societies that expect and practice magical things, between these traditions and the ESP scores achieved by their experimental subjects. One society, Samoa, which seems to lack little in food, sex, or health, is actually devoid of extra-normal practices. In this, Samoa is just about unique. By contrast, the parched American Indians held constant rain dances, which were, of course, a dramatic form of prayer. Some modern

American clergymen see prayer as a form of telepathy—between man and the Divine.

Because the religious and the parapsychological overlap in many areas, two prominent groups exist that link them formally: the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship in the United States, and the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical Research in Great Britain. Both have eminent clergymen among their leaders and both probe the area which is common to so many early basic religious beliefs—that of contact with the spirits of the dead. The practice of spiritualism is today most clearly formalized in England, but its practice has a long-standing worldwide appeal, ranging from Brazil to the Philippines and from France to Puerto Rico.

There is probably a more elaborate psychological way of putting this, but it seems to me that the evidence in this field shows that people get what they ask for. If they wish for spirit communication, they will find means to obtain it, whether through mediumship, the Ouija board, a shaking tent, automatic writing, raps on the ceiling, or by still more imaginative means. If they desire to bewitch a maiden in a neighboring village, potions, dances, and devices will be produced by a witch doctor or by themselves to this end—although a rival may muster the forces of competing magic. If an enemy is to be punished, a criminal apprehended, a piece of news communicated by telepathy—someone will claim that he can do the job and, often enough, the results are satisfactory.

But let me not be too facetious about this. I am talking about an area of psychology where we do not know exactly at what point fact and delusion separate. To speak of "primitive superstition" is as foolish as telling someone who suffers from very definite pains that "it's all in the mind." Psychosomatic medicine, which links psychological and physiological illness, is a science in its infancy. Its link to the magical in nonindustrial societies has been brilliantly explored by the contributors to the symposium on *Magic, Faith and Healing* (New York, 1964), edited by Dr. Arie Kiev. In his Introduction to this volume, Dr. Jerome D. Frank notes that "the healer, whether psychia-

trist or shaman, derives his healing powers from his status and role in the sufferers' society and functions, among other ways, as an evoker of healing forces, as mentor, a role model, and a mediator between the sufferer and his group. His task is to help the patient, whether he be a stockbroker, a research scientist, or an African tribesman, to mobilize his psychological and spiritual as well as his bodily resources." Dr. Kiev himself describes how impressed he was by Haitian Vodun (Voodoo) priests who showed a relationship with their patients that in many ways paralleled "the psychiatrist-patient relationship in Western society, despite the absence of scientific methods and knowledge of the discoveries of modern psychiatry." Santha Rama Rau's report on "The Devil Dancers of Ceylon," included in this volume, provides a firsthand documentation of these points. The preponderance of data from Pacific areas emphasizes that psychic phenomena are most frequently reported from regions where there has been a minimum intrusion of technology.

We have called this volume *True Experiences in Exotic ESP* because the setting of each story is far from our own, among people whom we call "primitive" or inhabitants of "nonindustrialized societies"—clumsy ways of saying that they are very different from ourselves. They are, in essence, no such thing. We are as exotic to them as they are to us. Any anthropologist from Mars, or even from the Andes Mountains, would find such rituals as the New York cocktail party, a high-level press conference, or a fashion show (not to mention the Miss America beauty pageant) highly ritualistic and exotically fascinating.

The additional fascination in reading stories of psychic phenomena from exotic places lies in the idea that there, but for the grace of accident in ethnic background, go all of us. And, at heart, all of us have now and then wished for some drastic, magical solution of problems that plague us; only a thin layer of the practical, the rational, of training in cause-and-effect thinking, separates us from our exotic neighbors.

The most direct link between much that may be called "exotic ESP" and laboratory research in extrasensory perception is offered by evidence for the control of mind over matter. How can one develop an experiment that tests magical claims of physical action, such as an accident, by statistical means? The nearest thing to it are "psychokinetic," or PK experiments; the word relates to the Greek *kineticos,* which means roughly, "in motion"—and so we have a concept suggesting that the mind is able to set things into motion.

In recent years, the question of healing by unorthodox means has moved into the foreground. While miracles in the realm of Western Christianity, such as those at the Lourdes shrine in France, have been subjected to stricter control—and claims for miraculous healing have consequently decreased—new reports of striking healing powers have come from more "exotic" quarters. Brazil and the Philippines have been the settings for the startling claims that many successful operations have been achieved under the guidance of "spirit surgeons." The spiritualist movement in Brazil, which is large and influential, operates not only through private practitioners but even sponsors hospitals.

In the Philippines, within a Christianity-oriented environment, and against a background of Polynesian ethnocultural traditions, practitioners such as Tony Agpaoa have gained wide attention. Some patients and other witnesses claim that Agpaoa is able to perform serious operations, making incisions by merely moving his fingers over human tissue, even removing diseased substances—with the wounds closing and healing instantly. Visitors from the United States, some of them desperately ill, quickly traveled to the Philippines and a disturbing atmosphere of sensationalism and controversy began to surround these events; it is too early to describe them objectively and definitively. However, the degree to which they link American interest with the exotic setting of the Philippine countryside illustrates dramatically that fascination with these phenomena knows no national or cultural boundaries.

MARTIN EBON

New York, 1968

Family and friends stood trembling around the woman's body as they listened to the old man accuse her murderer.

WHO KILLED MATA ARUHA?

Ronald Rose

There is a rich valley in the North Island of New Zealand occupied almost exclusively by Maoris. These vigorous Polynesian people whose forbears, six centuries ago, crossed the lonely Pacific by canoe to settle this land, whose grandfathers fought British forces a hundred years ago, today live peacefully with the white man, the pakeha. They have retained much of their old Maori culture and outlook and, in this valley, much of their most valued possession: land.

Follow the road inland from the pakeha town on the coast. You pass through misty hills clothed in their Winter coat of soft greens and hazy violets. These hills still bear the marks of ancient Maori labor, for most of them —those with the flattened tops and remains of deep trenches cut into the sides—were once the sites of fortified villages of the Maoris.

They called these fortified villages pas. With the coming of the white man and his insatiable demand for flax, the pas were moved down from the hilltops to the then-swampy lowlands. Today, in one section of this valley, in an area of but a few square miles, there are still eight or nine pas, with their weirdly-carved meeting houses facing.

There are the communal centers of the tribes and subtribes living in the valley. Here they feed and accommodate visitors, and hold all their important functions—the monthly meeting of the tribal committee, hangis or feasts for special occasions of celebration, and tangis when one

of their people dies. The meeting house and its nearby hall represent the sacred and the profane in Maori life.

Akuhata Pa is one of the biggest in the area. Today the marae is crowded, for it is an important occasion. The people are gathered in a wide, shallow arc facing in toward the meeting house, leaving a broad area clear for the chiefs and orators as they take their turn to speak. Up front, seated on stools, in the place of honor, are chiefs and elders from neighboring pas, some with elegantly-carved walking sticks held at a jaunty angle before them, talking gravely to each other. Behind them are their wives, and the younger men and women of the tribe, a few of them sprawled on the grass smoking cigarettes and enjoying the gentle warmth of the sun. Well away from the main area of the marae are the children, their frolics kept in check today by the watchful eyes of one or two of the young married women. Some of them are fully occupied with their younger brothers and sisters, whom they carry carelessly on the hip or blanketed, Eskimo-fashion, on the back.

Along the side of the dusty road, a short distance away, is a strange collection of cars (a few of them with fat brown babies sleeping on the seats), tractors, and horses. There are some buses, too, for today visitors have come from distant parts. And on the outskirts of the crowd there is a small, ragged army of scratching, sniffing, brawling dogs of many sizes, many colors, and many, many breeds.

On the side of the marae there is feverish activity. Young men carry bags of potatoes and dump them in enormous heaps before women, who energetically peel and scrape them. A side of beef swings from the branches of a tree. On a rough table, two young men chop huge slabs of pork into smaller, more manageable pieces, one of them wielding a broad knife and the other a tomahawk. On another long table near them, a table that sags with the weight, lie row upon row and tier upon tier of dressed poultry. No Maori guest is allowed to want.

Near by, a hollow has been scraped in the rich black soil and above it a pile of wood, several feet high, has

been neatly arranged ready for the flame. On top of the wood, the blackened stones of the hangi that have served their purpose so many times before, have been heaped. As the wood of the fire that heats them burns and then collapses with their weight, they will fall into the hollow below to give their gentle heat in turn to the pork and fowls and potatoes that are piled above them and covered with leaves, bags, and soil.

On the marae proper, near the meeting house where attention is focussed, my wife, Lyndon, and I, who have seated ourselves slightly to one side of the courtyard with a very senior chief of the area and some of the elders, can see three old women. The lips and chin of each are tattooed with designs in deep blue. Their grayed hair streams over stooped shoulders as the three old women squat cross-legged talking quietly amongst themselves.

From the half-dozen people ranged on either side of an open coffin on the veranda of the meeting house come discordant moans. The coffin lies on Maori flax mats, with some greenstone and whalebone clubs and priceless old kiwi cloaks, and around it are arranged framed photographs of the children of the occupant, a handsome middle-aged woman.

The body of a woman, Mata Aruha, has been neatly clothed, her long black hair combed and beribboned. A young red-eyed girl, Niniwa Kehua, squats cross-legged next to the coffin. She sways gently back and forth, as she moans an incoherent dirge. Gently, she strokes the hands, the face, of the body and implores, "Come back to us! Oh, come back to us!" The dead woman's husband, Tame, is huddled in a corner of the veranda with blankets around his shoulders. Like his companions, he has been here all night. His brown face is ashen.

A long, powerful black car pulls to a standstill nearby. From it steps a good-looking Maori girl, sleekly but soberly dressed in a gray tailored suit. In her dress and bearing she seems more white than Maori. Deep from the crowd at the back of the marae come a few cries in mock derision. "Look at the pakeha!" they called out. "Make way for the pakeha!"

The girl smiles with good humor but moves firmly across the marae straight toward the coffin. As she approaches, the three old women come to their feet. They break out in uncontrolled weeping, weeping that is chorused from the veranda of the meeting house and parts of the crowd. The old women call out the ceremonial welcome. "Haere mai! Haere mai! Haeri mai!" To us it sounds like a challenge and a lament.

For a moment the girl stands, head bowed, before the coffin. Tears stream down her face. Ostentatiously she wipes them away with wide sweeps of her hand. The orator who has been discoursing quietly to one side of the meeting house bursts forth with new endeavour, welcoming the relative, extolling the virtues of the dead woman, expressing the sorrow of the gathering—all this, of course, in the Maori tongue.

Now the girl slips off her black, high-heeled shoes (for to tread the ceremonial mats with shoes is indeed an insult) and greets in turn the close relatives of the woman. She grasps their hands and touches noses twice with each in the formal Maori hongi. She steps from the veranda, puts on her shoes, and reaches down for a beer bottle (which now holds water) on the ground beside her. This has been placed here for those who venture close to the dead and all know its use. She washes her hands and thus cleanses herself of the tapu of the corpse.

She moves away toward the crowd on the marae. Her face is now aglow. Cheerfully she greets her friends amongst those gathered here. Someone explains to us, "She has been working as a nurse in Auckland. It is good for her to see her friends again."

So the relatives and friends arrive and pay their respects, and there are short, sharp periods of lament. The size of the crowd on the marae grows. Someone refills the beer bottle. It is a simple drama. In our society, death is usually a close family affair; to the Maoris it is far more public. Lyn and I feel that we are intruders into the domestic sorrow of the dead woman's relatives, but no one else seems to think this. And today we feel that the dramatic climax is yet to come, that this tangi is to become an affair of even more public interest, for there is an atmosphere of tension and anticipation.

The climax is approaching. A hush falls over the crowd as the orator turns and walks slowly from the marae. All eyes turn to Pouwhare Pekatahi, the senior chief of the area. He grasps his walking stick firmly and rises slowly to his feet. With lumbering dignity he walks across the grass and turns to face the crowd.

He is a man of nearly eighty and big, even by Maori standards. His features are firm and would do credit to a man of fifty; his bull neck and broad shoulders tell of the vigor of his youth when he lived in the tribal way in the rugged hills to the back of the valley. He looks about him with alert, penetrating eyes that fear no man. He plants his stick firmly in the ground and, with both hands resting on it, his feet slightly apart, he begins his clear and forceful oration.

The first part is formal. Then, sensing that the right moment has arrived, the chief thrusts his stick forward, leans heavily on it, and gazes icily around the marae. There is absolute silence. Even the men and women preparing the food pause in their labors, half-peeled potato or bloody knife in hand. He does not shout, but every word rings across the marae.

"This is no ordinary death," he says slowly. "This woman before us was murdered."

He pauses and in the awful silence even the long grasses and the trees seem to stand still.

"This was makutu! This was sorcery!"

The dread word makutu shudders through the groups in gasps and whispers, and a buzz of subdued, excited conversation ripples through the crowd. The old man pauses again until attention returns to him. Then he speaks once more:

"The man who did this thing—I know his capacity for evil—the man who did this thing was Koro Tuna! I denounce him! Koro Tuna took the breath from her body. He stole the life of Mata Aruha in the night, so that even those who were close to her did not hear her last breath. I name him—Koro Tuna!"

Lyn and I knew the story. This was Tuesday. On Sunday afternoon we had been talking to the woman. Even then we had heard accounts of the mischief against her that the priest Koro was attempting to work. Gradually, we built up a picture of what was happening and felt the undercurrent of magical drama sweeping through the apparently placid group with whom we were working. Pouwhare Pekatahi told the whole story on the marae. As he did so we pieced in our small part in the happening.

It had all started a week before. Mata Aruha, usually quiet and reserved, had exchanged heated words with Koro Tuna, for his daughter, a married woman, was carrying on with a man whose wife had died recently. This was not proper, said Mata Aruha. It was not right in the old Maori way, nor was it right according to the principles of the pakeha. Were these people bound by no law, bound by no principles of morality or decency? Was Koro Tuna, a spiritual leader amongst the Maori people in the area, going to allow this to go on? Why had he not stopped it? How could he hold his head high, while his daughter flaunted the bonds of marriage?

Koro Tuna told her curtly that what he did or condoned was none of her business, and that what his daughter did was even less so. Who was she to raise her voice in criticism of him and his family?

The argument developed. And then it had come—the threat.

"He told me I would know his power—you know what he meant by that, don't you?" Mata Aruha had said to her family. "He has threatened me. I am not afraid of Koro Tuna the man, but I know all fears when I think of the powers this man has over life and death. The old-time powers of the tohungas, who could shatter a stone with the power of thought alone, or kill a bird even in its flight with but a glance, these powers have lingered on in this man, and I am afraid. How can my mind have peace?"

Then her brother died. No one could know the chill fears that gripped her in the three mournful days of her brother's tangi. She returned to her home, weakened in body and low in spirit, exhausted and apprehensive.

Something must be done, said Tame, her husband. She must move her bedding, without delay, to the meeting house and place her mattress next to that of old crippled Kehua, who slept there. He was over eighty and he understood makutu; he could shield her from Koro Tuna's unseen powers. There she could feel safe. There—where carvings and ancient photographs of her ancestors looked down upon her—was spiritual sanctuary. She promptly moved across to the carved, weathered meeting house where Lyn and I found her that Sunday afternoon, alert and, outwardly at least, in good spirits.

We had been looking forward to meeting Mata Aruha for some time; in our quest for people in this area who were known for their psychical experiences, her name had frequently been mentioned. She had practiced as a "medium"—in the spiritualist sense—and still did so on special occasions, we were told. Her specialty was to diagnose people's ailments. When someone was brought to her, she would fall into a trance and through her mouth came the voice of her much-loved daughter who had died nearly ten years before at the age of sixteen. Witnesses of these trances had told us that Mata Aruha's features seemed to become younger as trance settled on her and her slow voice changed to the vibrant, vigorous tones of a teen-age girl. The girl would tell the cause of the patient's trouble and suggest a method of treatment. Told of the many cures she had to her credit, Mata Aruha seemed to us a person of unusual interest.

The meeting house had been crowded when we arrived on Sunday. The air was thick with tobacco smoke. When our eyes became used to the gloom we saw groups of chattering women busily sorting bundles of clothing left by a missionary early in the day. Brown-eyed children peeped at us shyly from behind their mothers' skirts and the carved posts of the house. Old Kehua was stretched out on his mattress, his crutches beside him, a tiny babe in his arms. He broke off from his conversation with the other old men and greeted us warmly.

He introduced Mata Aruha. With her was Kehua's granddaughter, Niniwa, caring for her. Mata was not

well, that was clear, but she seemed reasonably bright. We told her we had heard of her trance powers and explained why we were so interested. We wanted her to feel that we were not just idle, curious pakehas. But she pleaded that she was tired. She would certainly help us if she could, though she failed to see how she could do so; and would we not call to see her later in the week? Then, perhaps, she would be feeling better. Impatient though we were, we agreed.

Shortly after we left that afternoon—as one of Mata Aruha's relatives told us later and Pouwhare Pekatahi told the people on the marae—Koro Tuna himself visited the meeting house. He talked to the old men; he cast barely a glance at Mata Aruha. The women, having finished the sorting of the clothes, wandered off to prepare the evening meal for the men, who shortly followed them. Koro Tuna left.

Old Kehua, tired with the activities of the day, the visit of the missionary with his bundles of clothing in the morning, and his talks with the pakehas from Australia through the afternoon, dozed. Niniwa Kehua left for a moment the woman she had been tending. When she returned, there was a man crouched beside Mata Aruha. It was Koro Tuna! He had come back into the meeting house. As she stood watching in silent horror, the priest slowly and deliberately took from Mata Aruha's trembling fingers a cigarette, the cigarette she was smoking, put it to his lips and smoked it. He rose and walked quietly out into the gray dusk.

Instantly Niniwa realized all the terrible implications of what she had seen. With one simple act, Koro Tuna had increased a hundredfold his power over the woman he had threatened. In terms of magic, the part equals the whole. Just as a witch doctor, in the heart of the African jungles, works his sorcery with a single hair from the person he wishes to harm, or an Australian aboriginal "clever man" with a nail paring, so Koro Tuna had taken a part of his intended victim, her cigarette. Thus the whole of her was virtually in his power; he could decide whether she should live or die.

Niniwa raised the alarm. Soon the meeting house was crowded again. Old Kehua was roused from his slumbers and told what had happened. He listened carefully and, as the full import of Niniwa's almost incoherent narrative dawned upon him, his face darkened.

"Watch her breath," he said, for the old man knew now the form that Koro Tuna's sorcery would take.

Soon afterward, already laboring to breathe, Mata Aruha passed into unconsciousness. Her last words were, "He is killing me, that Koro Tuna."

At five o'clock in the morning, with her relatives sleeping fitfully near her and only poor Niniwa wide awake, Mata Aruha drew a sharp, sudden breath, and died. Her death certificate says she died of bronchial asthma.

But no death certificate tells the whole story. The primary cause of death, as it appears to the examining physician, is stated. Usually there is no reference to the multitude of precipitating causes or the countless factors of heredity and environment, of attitude and belief, that mold a person's life and may eventually shape his death.

The certificate for Mata Aruha does not tell the story of her life—how, from her birth fifty years ago, she had grown up in an atmosphere of magic and superstition. It does not tell of the misty nights by a campfire or lantern when a tiny brown girl listened with wide eyes and open mouth to the eerie tales told by the old folk, stories of the tohungas and their power over things both in this world and in the other world you cannot see. It does not tell of the feats she herself believed she saw these priests perform—she heard them speaking to the gods and she heard the gods reply to them; she saw them apparently control the elements (it was well known that Koro Tuna's father could divide the waters of the river), and strike men down without raising a hand; and she saw them gaze on the sick and make them well, stroke the injured and restore them to health.

She herself had experienced something of these wonderful powers. Through her, it seemed, the spirit of her daughter had returned from time to time to heal those near to her. And, she had told us in our one brief inter-

view with her, she could gaze out the windows at night or into the mists of the day and see the ghostly hosts of those who had died before. They crowded around her. Mata Aruha lived in two worlds.

But what are the facts? What is the explanation of Mata Aruha's death in terms of our materialistic western ideas? Does Koro Tuna have some magical power at his command, some power foreign to our culture? Or is his power a more subtle psychological one? Did he kill Mata Aruha with the sort of mind force attributed to old-time priests? Did he precipitate her death by threat and suggestion; or would she have died at this time, whether or not he had threatened her and made magic against her? In other words, what foundation in fact was there for her belief in his powers?

On the surface it might seem easy enough to answer these questions. Actually, they and their kind are some of the most tantalizing confronting scientists today.

We cannot yet give an unequivocal answer to the questions about Koro Tuna. We can only state some probabilities. On the evidence available from experimental sources we can say that it is very unlikely that he wielded actual psychical forces that halted the vital processes in his victim's body. I believe that this is the attitude that would be taken by most parapsychologists; a few might reserve the possibility of an actual psychic force. On the other hand, it is also unlikely that her death would have occurred at that time if the events set in motion by Mata Aruha's argument with the sorcerer had not taken place.

We are left with the explanation that, due to a large number of factors, mostly psychological, Mata Aruha's death was hastened; she died, so to speak, before her time. Her death and the real circumstances of her death are, however, but some of the many mysteries that surround us.

I have changed the names of the persons in this account. This was necessary, for the incident is true and the people who took part in it are still living. The apparent sorcery causing Mata Aruha's death took place amongst a people, some of whose friends and relatives have reached

the highest levels—in the professions, in the arts, and in politics—of the western culture. It is but another example of the dominating belief in magic that exists amongst some peoples today—not in the heart of primitive jungle or arid desert, but in a rich farming area in New Zealand. And many a pakeha New Zealander in the cities and towns of this country is, without knowing it, rubbing shoulders today with Koro Tuna, the sorcerer, and men like him.

The author crossed the fiery oven with his bare feet and remained unharmed.

I WALKED ON FIRE

Wilmon Menard

My interest in man's strange experiments in fiery tortures was aroused some years ago when the late Robert Ripley, of "Believe It or Not" fame, sponsored a fire-walking Hindu mystic by the name of Kuda Bux in a public demonstration. Bux strolled barefooted across two separate fire pits in a parking lot at Rockefeller Center in New York City. It is a matter of official record that three cords of oak and five hundred pounds of charcoal burned for eight hours before Kuda Bux made the walk across the two separate ovens, whose temperature a pyrometer registered at 1,220° F. Attending physicians peered and smelled at the soles of the firewalker's feet, but found only one small burn, where a coal had stuck to his instep. But their nostrils detected no odor of burned flesh. I was one of the astounded spectators, and I was deeply impressed.

Just a short time ago, I was in Papeete, Tahiti, when word reached me that an *umuti* (firewalk) was to be held on the island of Raiatea, one hundred and thirty-five miles away. I lost no time in booking passage on an inter-island trading schooner. But, for all my eagerness, I didn't realize then that I myself would take part in the ceremony.

A native friend took me at dawn to the valley where the oven, heaped high with large rocks, was blazing. It was thirty feet long, fifteen feet wide and four feet deep. It had been burning for two days. The huge rocks, which

were settling to the level of the ground, glowed bright red in the faint light of the South Pacific dawn. Now and then, between us and the oven, the coconut-oil smeared bodies of the Polynesian fire tenders passed briefly, as they raked out the last of the log cinders and leveled the hot rocks. It was not unlike a scene from Dante's *Inferno.*

Now as I watched, holding my hand in front of my face to shield it from the intense radiated heat from the *umu,* or oven, I thought of man's superstitious dread and awe of fire, coupled with his instinctive, practical usages, which have combined to produce so many fantastic fire ordeals. The American Indians, during certain rites, danced in the live coals of their campfires; devotees of the Sinsyu Shinto sect of Japan walk barefooted over glowing coals. In Hawaii in the early days, the priests and priestesses of the fire goddess Pele strode across the molten lava on the broad bosom of Kilauea Volcano. In some parts of Africa, new-born children are held briefly over a flame. In India cremation of the corpse is supposed to be the soul's only passport to life beyond death.

Now the Firewalk of Polynesia was to be performed before my eyes. Chief Terii-Pao, the young and hereditary firewalker of Raiatea, had suddenly decided to call an *umuti,* primarily, of course, to pay homage to the two great goddesses of ancient days—Hina-nui-te'a'ara, the Goddess of the Moon, and Te-Vahine-nui-tahu-ra'i (The-Great-Woman-Who-Set-Fire-to-the-Sky)—but also to earn a few francs with which to buy a bottle of rum and a few yards of calico cloth for his woman.

As I watched, Terii-Pao stepped from his nearby coconut-palm temple, and several attendants, similarly garbed in native *preu* and sacred *ti*-leaves, followed. I could feel the crackling excitement that swept the clearing upon his appearance. The laughter, singing and loud talking ceased instantly. All eyes were fixed upon the handsome chief, a splendid figure standing at the head of his assistants. He turned, caught my eyes and smiled. Once we had sailed aboard a trading schooner to the pearl-diving atoll of Anaa in the Dangerous Archipelago; I had given him a case of foodstuffs, and we were friends.

The many tourists who had voyaged on the inter-island schooner from Papeete surrounded Terii-Pao and began a careful inspection of his feet. He submitted indulgently, grinning broadly at their thorough examination. I saw one of the tourists turn, walk to the edge of the fiery pit, and look full into the center of the oven for a few seconds. With a groan he backed away as he clapped his hands over his face. I could see that his neck and face were badly seared and tears streamed from his glazed eyes. Another visitor, with the aid of a long stick, dropped a handkerchief upon the rocks and it turned almost instantly to a gray powder. The oven was certainly hot! The tourists withdrew from Terii with baffled expressions.

Chief Terii, his head held high and his eyes uplifted to the opalescent sky, walked toward the end of the oven, a branch of *ti*-leaves in his hand. There he stopped, striking the rocks three times with the *ti*-wand. He began to chant in Tahitian the ancient firewalking prayer. I know the language, and I listened closely.

These were the words:

"O Being who enchants the oven, let it die out for a while! O dark earthworms! O light earthworms! Fresh water and salt water, heat of the oven, darkening of the oven, hold up the footsteps of the walkers and fan the heat of the bed. O cold host, let us linger in the midst of the oven. O Vahine-nui-tahu-ra'i, hold the fan and let us go into the oven for a little while!"

Finally came Terii's loud and exultant shout of: *"O Vahine-nui-tahu-ra'i-e!* All is covered!"

I shall never forget the great sigh and then the hush that followed the chief's first step upon the pit. He hesitated a moment as if to be sure that the stones would not shift under his weight, and then, with an almost hypnotic expression, he walked onto the glowing bed of rocks. The tourists gave a gasp of dismay; the natives sat stiffly, unmoving, as if mesmerized. I watched wonderingly. This was no sham. A human being was walking onto an oven of rocks sufficient to roast him! Terii crossed the pit and then turned and retraced his steps. Upon his return, his assistants formed in a straight line behind him. Again

Terii struck the edge of the glowing rocks with his *ti*-wand; then he and his followers marched with firm steps across the *umu*.

I could see the heat waves rippling above their heads, but there was no odor of seared flesh, as one might expect. I stared fixedly until they had traversed the oven, expecting every second that one of them would leap with a scream of agony from the line. But each one passed safely. The last firewalker stepped from the oven, and Terii raised his *ti*-leaves, took his place at the head of the column, and led them back across the fiery expanse. This was repeated three times.

With the third crossing, Terii raised his *ti*-leaves and cried: *"Atira!* Enough!" Then, unexpectedly, he turned quickly and *crawled across the thirty-foot oven of rocks on his stomach!*

At the far side he stood up, grinned and beckoned to the tourists to make their inspection. One of them placed his palm to the soles of Terii's feet and then turned a baffled face to the others, crying: "They're not even warmed!" I also moved forward to examine his feet. They were not even marked by the crossing of the fiery furnace! The examination over, we withdrew, our amazement plain in our faces.

Terii then turned to the assembled natives and exhorted those who were afflicted with any physical or mental taints, who were in need of spiritual purification, or who wished to test their courage with fire, to walk behind him over the hot rocks. Passing close to me, he caught my eye again, grinned, and stopped. "Perhaps you would like to walk behind me across the *umu*. You have lived long in our islands and understand our customs and ceremonies. But if you are afraid, it would be dangerous to attempt the firewalk."

It was his last remark that compelled me to kick off my sneakers, remove my socks and cry: *"Haere outou!* Let's go!"

A loud chorus of *"Maitai!* Good!" rose from the native onlookers. A comic among the tourists yelled: "You're going to be sorry, chum!"

I stepped into the column of walkers forming behind the chief. Now my bravado was on the ebb. I was experiencing the first symptoms of fright, and I cursed the impulse that had made me accept Terii's invitation to walk behind him over the *umu*. There was the customary taut feeling in my throat, and my stomach felt as if it had suddenly been invaded by crazed butterflies. My heart started to pound violently; my head ached, and I wanted very badly to step out of line. I have always had an uncommon fear of fire, since the day in my childhood when I fell into a burning bonfire. Now that memory was intensified. The stalwart *tahua* (priest) behind me gave me a light push. Terii had started toward the fire pit!

I clamped my teeth hard, inhaled deeply, and gave a belly-depth groan. Mechanically I started to walk, and I felt not unlike a somnambulist proceeding toward a portentous fate. My legs felt numb and leaden; my heart was now thudding with jarring impact against my ribs. Then my bare feet touched something uneven and elevated. This is it, I told myself; you'd better step out of line before it's too late! Another firm shove on my shoulders, and in the next instant countless tiny electric shocks pricked the bottom of my feet.

It was not unlike the sudden jabbing of the skin with sharp needles. Smothering heat waves shimmered before my steadfast gaze, compelling me at last to half close my eyes. It was like the sudden rush of heat that explodes from the widely flung doors of a huge blast furnace. The heat of the oven all but suffocated me. My lungs became filled with superheated air, and I felt I would collapse if I did not breathe pure cool air quickly. As if from a great distance, through a long windswept tunnel, I heard the murmuring of the spectators. And as I walked I felt that I must surely present an abject figure treading behind Terii, if my physical aspect matched my mental unrest.

Then, suddenly, the tingling sensation on the bottom of my feet ceased, and I knew that I had crossed the oven. I glanced down at my feet. They were untouched! I had half-expected to see burn-blisters erupting between the toes, and the flesh bursting under intense roasting. Every

pore of my body filtered rivulets of sweat, and I could see that Chief Terii's broad back was glistering with globules of body moisture. Terii abruptly lifted his wand of *ti*-leaves, a recognized signal that the last in line had passed over the *umu,* and now everyone was to right-about-face for the return transit. I knew that I could not undergo another walk upon the hot stones, so I stepped quickly out of line. Terii grinned and gave me an understanding slap on my shoulders. Then he led his followers back across the oven.

Quickly I was surrounded by the tourists, who lifted my feet and wiped away the dirt to search for burn marks. There were none! The natives shook my hand, and gave complimentary shouts of *"Maitai-roa!* Very good!"

Several white men have walked barefooted across the fiery ovens of Polynesia, among them Dr. William Craig and his brother, former British resident agents of the Cook Islands, and they made a safe crossing. Some, voicing flippant or skeptical remarks, were horribly burned during an *umuti,* necessitating hospitalization; others, believing in the strange ceremonies of the islands, have made the walk unscathed. The reasons for the different experiences I cannot explain.

Some assayers of human immunity to fireburn have made interesting observations. A writer and traveler in Japan, John Hyde, noticed that the priests, before walking over their herb-strewn fire pits, rubbed the soles of their feet with salt. He experimented similarly, and after a walk across an oven, he remarked: "My confidence was not misplaced. In my feet I felt only a sensation of gentle warmth, but my ankles, to which no salt was applied, were scorched."

Some years ago, the astute magician and escape artist Harry Houdini, an avid debunker of performances of the so-called supernatural, blasted demonstrations of fire-eaters and firewalkers in his book *Miracle Mongers and Their Methods* (E. P. Dutton, 1920). He took particular exception to a "roasting alive" act performed by a young man garbed only in bathing trunks, inside a heated glass

enclosure, a steak dangling from his arm. The idea was for the exhibitionist to remain inside the booth, exposed to a high register of heat, until the steak was thoroughly cooked. Houdini pointed out that the young man protected his hair with a bathing cap and had smeared clay over his eyebrows, so that the hair would not retain the heat longer than skin cells. That, Houdini maintained, with the tempering effect of excreting perspiration, was the solution to this heat-torture act. However, the magician explained, if the man had stayed in the over-heated enclosure beyond a certain period of time, his body would have become dehydrated and serious heat prostration would have resulted. Precise timing was the explanation of this trick, according to Houdini.

Some debunkers of firewalking have suffered severe penalties—just recently, in the case of one William Spaeth of Hollywood, California, who dabbles in fiery rites in his stage shows. One of his tricks was to walk over burning charcoal scattered over a sandy bed. He decided to use larger chunks of charcoal, but at a rehearsal the performance backfired, and Spaeth was hurried to the Georgia Street Receiving Hospital in an ambulance, suffering first and second degree burns. He had to learn to walk on his hands for a while.

At a jungle shrine in Ceylon, just a short time ago, a group of local *sadhus* celebrated a rite of Hindu holy men: walking barefoot over a bed of glowing coals. This was good news to Reverend Eric Robinson, a British Methodist missionary, who decided to debunk the *sadhus*. He kicked off his sneakers, tore off his socks, and headed for the fire pit. He stepped onto the coals and, before the holy men could stop him, marched the entire length alone. The doctor's verdict: horrible burns on the feet, which kept the Reverend Mr. Robinson from his missionary work for some weeks.

A more sober experiment in heat and its effects on the human body was conducted recently at the University of California in Los Angeles. The study was supervised by Dr. Craig Taylor, physiologist and engineer, at the re-

quest of the United States government. It was not simply a consideration of pyrolatry, or worship of fire.

The government wanted to know one very important thing: was there a possibility that Army, Navy, and Marine jet pilots would be roasted alive in the friction-heated cockpits of their supersonic crafts? These jet planes need refrigeration systems to keep their cockpits comfortable and bearable. What would happen to a pilot if the cooling equipment failed as a runaway jet screamed through the sky? Would the pilot collapse at the controls? Would he succumb to heat prostration? Would he have to bail out in the stratosphere, or would he be literally baked alive in the cockpit? Could he stay at the controls, enduring the terrific heat, until he could slow the plane down?

This was a big order, but Professor Taylor was determined to find out what would happen to a human in a jet-plane in flight if the cooling system faulted. With the help of his assistants, he made a testing furnace out of a huge steel cylinder, and provided a strong fan to suck in dry air across an outside battery of white-hot electric grids. The first human guinea pigs remained in this hot-box until the heat passed the boiling point of water (212° F.). These student volunteers in the heat experiment came out a little groggy and florid-faced, but quite "uncooked."

Professor Taylor reserved the final and decisive tests for himself. His hands, feet and neck were protected before he was wheeled into the cylinder, whose temperature upon entrance in this supreme experiment read 230° F. He remained in this overheated atmosphere for 15¼ minutes, as the heat climbed to 262° F. While he was in the cylinder, an egg fried on a metal frypan in front of him. His face became fiery red when the hot blasts of air hit it, and his nasal membranes contracted, but apart from these discomforts he experienced no physical or mental agony.

His answer was simple and to the point: The human body's resistance to heat is in its own cooling system, which nature has so thoughtfully provided—perspiration and mucous secretions. He proved that the moisture

evaporating from the skin provides part of the body with a layer of cool air—just as a "desert waterbag" hanging on the outside of a car traveling through hot wasteland keeps the water cool from its own evaporation of moisture through porous canvas.

While inside the hotbox, Professor Taylor learned that at one time, when the register of heat was at 236° F., the air three-quarters of an inch from his nose was 226° F. The skin of the nose itself registered a safe 119.5° F. —over 100 degrees cooler. Air drawn into the nostrils was cooled down to 100° F., which certainly could not injure the lungs. The general temperature of his body rose only a couple of degrees.

But what the Professor did emphasize as a danger to jet pilots in overheated cockpits was the raised temperature of the blood conveyed to the brain cells. This would give pilots of jet planes the surest indication of approaching heat prostration should cooling equipment break down. He pointed out that man's fear of heat is chiefly a mental torture. Humans, no matter if they are pilots in friction-heated cockpits of jet planes or unfortunate victims trapped in burning buildings or ships, can overcome high registers of heat by rational, well-organized attitudes of self-preservation. Fright or overexcitement can raise the temperature of the blood many degrees.

Later, another test was made to learn the effects of heat on the minds and bodies of GI infantry troops in desert fighting, where the daytime temperature averaged 116 degrees. An experimental station, comparable to heat and humidity conditions of other deserts in the world, was set up at the Yuma Test Station in Arizona, where stress and strain on the men under intolerable heat could be gauged on a treadmill, which, housed in a hotbox, was promptly labeled "The Idiot Box." Eighteen GIs were put in relays on the squirrel run, with the heat well above 116 degrees. After a long session on this getting-no-where hike, the GIs were taken out and urged on a double-time march, with and without packs, and ordered to grub out

foxholes and perform experimental tactical problems. During this period, their pulses, weights and temperatures were taken regularly.

The findings were illuminating: the body took from five days to two weeks to adapt itself to the heat. During this time, the skin became accustomed to perspiring more advantageously, losing a minimum of salt; more blood circulated to the skin and thereby cooled itself; and the men learned to move slowly and retain energy. It was found, too, that a man subjected to this heat can sweat more than two quarts of water an hour, which is about forty-eight times more than the average loss in a temperate climate. It was recommended that infantry troops exposed to desert heat should drink as much water as they wanted, notwithstanding the old campaign concept of "water discipline," which permitted only a rare, maddening swallow. Also, salt tablets were abandoned in the Yuma test in preference to having a normal amount of salt with meals.

The GIs expended much of their body heat upward to the open sky. They were cooler on the open desert than in a wash or in the bottom of a ravine, or even in their tents. The standard weight of the pack was too heavy for desert operations. The men became 24-carat moaners about their chow, refusing such popular items as greasy pork chops and oil-soaked, mayonnaise-smeared salads. Some demanded more fruit juices and light foods, and many lost their appetites altogether. Most of the GIs slept poorly during the constant heat, and became cranky, argumentative, complaining, and hard to handle.

The firewalkers of Raiatea, Japan, Fiji, India, and Africa have had no indoctrination as to the scientific principles of heat, and, therefore, it is quite understandable that they would look to a psychic or supernatural source to explain their safe walks across fire pits. Certainly, the *umuti* of Raiatea is a remarkable feat. You must bear in mind that hot rocks and not hot air come into contact with the flesh of the participants. I think Professor Taylor

would have to admit that Chief Terii's ceremony is quite different from the study he conducted.

And I have to remind myself that no scientist has completely explained to my satisfaction how I crossed the fiery pit at Raiatea without so much as a blistered toe.

Below the tyrannic-materialistic veneer of today's Communist China lies an ancient tradition of supernatural experience, study, and philosophy.

CHINA'S PSYCHIC HERITAGE

Chung Yu Wang

China, with a history of a virtually continuous existence of 5,000 years, rich both in culture and discoveries, is assuredly a country also rich in occurrences of paranormal phenomena. However, such phenomena, on the one hand, have been belittled or rather looked upon askance by scholars of the Confucian school, and on the other hand, have been more or less mythicized by the adherents of Taoism and Buddhism. In this article I shall attempt to single out, for discussion, only a few trustworthy accounts of these phenomena, as recorded in Chinese literature, as well as to describe some phases of these phenomena peculiar to China herself.

Confucius himself maintained an agnostic attitude toward anything that had to do with supernormal phenomena attributed to spirits. In the sayings of Confucius (*Lun-Yü* VII), he avoided speaking on such subject as "Spirits." He wrote in *Lun-Yü* XI: "Chi Lu asked about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master said: 'While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits.' Chi Lu added: 'I venture to ask about death.' He was answered, 'While you do not know life, how can you know death.' "

In *Shi-King* III, Ode 2, he wrote:

"The spirits come, but when, and where
No one before hand can declare
Therefore we should not spirits slight
But ever live in their sight."

Evidently Confucius, being an ethical teacher, did not wish to declare himself explicitly on the question of whether spirits can manifest themselves.

At the close of the first century, there lived the skeptical philosopher Wang Chung, who boldly wrote of trance mediumship, apparently known to him personally. He said that "among men, the dead speak through living persons whom they throw into a trance; and the 'wu' (mediums), strumming their black chords, call down souls of the dead, which then speak through the mouths of the 'wu'."

In the reign of King Kuei-ming (264 A.D.) two mediums, called upon to identify the grave of a princess, gave evidence of clairvoyant powers by describing the garments in which she was buried, which, when the coffin was opened, were found to tally exactly with the description given. A case of telepathy was recorded by Ch'en Kuah in the eleventh century. He said "she, 'wu' (the medium), even knew the thoughts arising in others. Guests, who were just then playing draughts, held in their hands some black or white draughtsmen which they had previously counted. They asked her how many there were and she gave the answer correctly every time; but then they took handfuls without counting them and she could not mention their numbers. It was thus evident that she could know what others knew, but not what others did not bear in their minds."

Ch'en Kuah also mentioned the case of a female "wu" who was able to reveal anything happening miles away which her uncle wished to know about. This would now be classified as a case of traveling clairvoyance.

The so-called *History of the South* records a remarkable case of materialization. "There was a 'wu' who could see spirits and who assured the Emperor (Hsiao Wu, A.D. 454-465) that it would be possible to make his deceased secondary consort appear. The Emperor was very glad of it, and bade him evoke her. In a few minutes she was actually seen on a curtain in the shape which she had had when alive. The Emperor desired to speak with her, but

she remained silent; and just as he would fain have grasped her hand, she vanished."

In the year 825 A.D. a female "wu," in the presence of Li Hsiang, Prefect of Meng Chow, declared: "I am a specter-seer who can summon spirits by calling them hither. There are two kinds of spirits, those which enjoy happiness and blessing and others which are poor and mean; the former have a vitality so vigorous and healthy that they can speak with men from time to time while the latter have a breath so weak and exhausted that they are obliged to employ one as their mouthpiece." In modern parlance, the former phenomenon is called "independent voice" and the latter "control mediumship."

As to the phenomenon of "automatic writing," we possess a well-known case, parallel to that of Patience Worth in the United States, in the person of a girl, daughter of Wong Lun, Doctor in the Court of Sacrificial Worship. Her automatic writing (A.D. 1035) was of such exquisite beauty that it has been incorporated in the *Collected Works of the Female Immortal.* The girl-medium who wrote such beautiful literary compositions was also a materialization medium. It was recorded that the materialized figure was visible only above the loins while below them it was veiled as if by a cloud.

The following anecdote about an ancient Chinese materialization séance is taken from the Chinese work *Ling I Chi,* or *Record of Psychic Phenomena,* which was compiled toward the end of the ninth century A.D. Hsu Chih-yung was married to a lady of refined appearance and demeanor who died young. He felt his loss acutely. One evening he was playing on his lute in the moonlight in front of his house, when he became aware of a person moving about on the other side of the hanging door-screen. Then, after an interval, he heard a voice saying: "It is I, your dead wife. If you wish to see me, you must get in touch with a man called the Fourteen Chao."

A few years later, Chih-yung was strolling about Soochow in the springtime, when he met Fourteen Chao. Arrangement was made for a séance at his home. An auspicious day having been selected, the principal room was

swept clean, incense was burnt, and a couch and small table were placed against the west wall; an altar was also erected for the occasion just beyond the eaves of the house. Wine and food were prepared, and ceremonial posturing was performed to the accompaniment of whistling, and music on stringed instruments.

Then, when night had fallen, Mr. Hsu was given a seat in the eastern corner of the room, and Mr. Chao pulled down the bamboo blind under the eaves. They sat in silence until the third watch (11 P.M.), when suddenly they heard the sound of some one moving in the outer court.

"Is that the wife of the graduate Hsu?" Chao asked.

After four distinct sighs, the answer came, "Yes."

"In obedience to your husband's earnestly expressed desire," said Chao, "we have ventured to make contact with you. Please do not take it amiss. May I beg you to come into the room?"

Hesitatingly, some one seemed to raise the blind, and lo! Mr. Hsu's wife stood before them. She was wearing a simple dress, and her face was unpainted. Inclining herself to Mr. Chao, she passed slowly into the room, and sat down facing her husband, who said, with streaming eyes and his voice choked with sobs: "Have I done wrong in coming to you like this?"

His wife replied: "All this is preordained. How can it be wrong?"

She then began to ask a number of questions about her son and daughter, and the other dear ones she had left behind, and also the old village home. Mr. Hsu asked about men's faith in the Buddhist scriptures, and whether merit could really be acquired thereby.

"It is all true," she said.

He then asked what offerings were most acceptable to the spirit world. "The spring and autumn sacrifices are all acceptable," she said, "but simple rice-gruel is what we like best."

So Mr. Chao had some of this brought in, and when it was given to her she raised it to her lips and appeared to consume it. Mr. Hsu asked if she stood in need of "merit."

(It is a widely held Buddhist belief that the merit gained by virtuous deeds on earth can be applied to the mitigation of suffering in the other world.)

But his wife replied: "All my life I did nothing wicked; what guilt, then, have I to wipe away? What you have already done has gained me all the merit possible."

After a while Mr. Chao said: "Lady, you must leave us now; for I fear you may be blamed if you stay too long." Thereupon she turned to leave the room, but Mr. Hsu rushed after her, weeping, and exclaimed: "I want you to give me some little thing that I may keep as a memento."

His wife replied: "We spirits can only bring tears with us to the world of men; but if you give me one of your garments, I will deposit something on that."

Accordingly her husband took off his tunic and laid it on the ground. His wife picked it up, buried her face in it, and wailed aloud; then she hung the tunic on the branch of a tree that stood in the courtyard, waved adieu with her hand, and vanished into thin air. When Hsu took the tunic down and examined it, he found that her tears had stained it all over with blood. So grief-stricken was he that for several days he would not touch food. [Abstracted from a translation by Lionel Giles.]

Coming down to present-day China, it is no surprise to any one to find that nearly all the different types of both parapsychical and paraphysical phenomena as known in both Europe and America are also quite prevalent in China. We have such phenomena as telekinesis, raps, poltergeists, independent voices, levitation, psychic photography, materialization, automatic writing, telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, premonition, apparitions, and haunted houses. Strange to say, the phenomena of apports and psychometry have not come to my notice. Instead of crystal-gazing we have water-gazing. Mediums there are, but most of them, as in America and Europe, are professionals, practicing on the credulity of the common people.

Mention may be made of the so-called mongoose-haunted houses, so prevalent in North China. These mysterious animals have never been actually seen by any peo-

ple although occasionally they may be discerned in a flash of a moment. Naturally people attribute to them all sorts of supernormal intelligence, which, I may say, can be paralleled with those of the mongoose of the Isle of Man, which drew the interest of British researchers several years ago.

In present-day China, there are forms of psychic manifestations which are in a way peculiar to her. The following accounts are given to show some aspects of such phenomena.

Ancestor worship, as practiced in China through the centuries, undoubtedly stems from the idea of filial piety, so much emphasized by Confucius in his teachings. In the *Hsiao King* we read that "Filial piety is the root of all virtues and the stem out of which grow all moral teachings." Further we are told that "Confucius sacrificed to the spirits (of ancestors) as though the spirits were present."

In order to understand fully this form of worship, we must know of the Chinese conception of human soul. There are two Chinese words, *hun-pai,* to express what is the essence of the human soul. Etymologically the word *hun* means "saying" or "expressing" and the word *pai* means "white, whiteness, and bright light"; the former can be construed to connote "activity," the latter, "appearance." Thus, the structure of the soul may be said to compose of two dominating elements, corresponding to what Tyrrell calls the "Noumenal I" (*hun*) and the "Empirical I" (*pai*). According to popular belief, the *pai* after death stays a longer time with its earthly surroundings than the evanescent *hun,* which goes off everywhere. In Li Chi, Book 11, it is mentioned that "the soul-breath *hun* returns to the skies, the bodily *pai* returns to the earth," i.e. close to its surroundings.

To the mass of people, "Heaven" or "God" are too vague to worship. Hence in ancient times, several centuries before Confucius, as Dr. Hu Shih observed in his Ingersoll Lecture in 1945, "the Shang people had a custom of paying special honor to a select few of their ancestors by 'deifying' them, that is by conferring on them the title

of Ti (god)." However, after the time of Confucius, this idea of godship attached to one's ancestors had disappeared. Instead, one's ancestors are worshiped as such. The general belief is that the *hun-pai,* specially the *pai,* can be invoked, for blessings, particularly blessings of a material nature.

In a village, this practice of worship is generally carried out twice a year during spring and autumn. It is customary to have an elder of the village or one who is prominent in learning or in business activity to intone a written prayer, while kneeling and posturing on the floor and facing the ancestor tablets which are put up on a so-called altar. These tablets contain the names of ancestors about five generations back. Sacrifices generally in the form of roast pigs and chickens are offered, but symbolically, because they are later on to be divided up for the participants of this worship to carry home.

The words Feng Shui literally mean "wind" and "water." It can almost be said that Feng Shui per se, as a belief, is a by-product of ancestor worship. The belief itself embodies the idea that if one's parents or ancestors have been buried in a properly selected piece of ground, prosperity will accrue to their progeny.

To understand the inner meaning of Feng Shui one has to go back to the teachings of Lao-tzu, known as Taoism. It is mysticism, but only a mysticism which is fundamentally empirical, realistic and animistic. It is rather the animistic phase of Taoism that has something to do with the development of Feng Shui. To the believers of Feng Shui, nature is animate in the sense that it gives a touch of *anima mundi* to the dead person buried in the ground.

To my mind the word "pan-psychism" expresses more succinctly what is at the back of this pristine notion of Feng Shui. For a rational view of what is meant by pan-psychism, let us turn to Alfred North Whitehead, who, in his Lowell Lectures, in 1926, makes this remark:

"So matter and mind, which persist through a route of such occasions, must be relatively abstract; and they must gain their specific individualities from their respective routes. The character of a bit of matter must be some-

thing common to each occasion of its route; and analogously, the character of mind must be something common to each occasion of its route. Each bit of matter, and each mind is a subordinate community—in the sense analogous to the actual world. . . . Again in such a route—material or mental—the environment will also partially determine the forms of the occasions. But that which the occasions have in common, so as to form a route of mind or a route of matter, must be derived by inheritance from the antecedent members of the route."

Thus mind and matter are at "Oneness" with each other, a confluence of mutuality, in spite of the difference in "routes."

Among the intellectuals of the Sung and Tang periods, the conception of the spiritual companionship of earth and man was prevalent. Here the *anima mundi* was considered to influence the living and not the dead. The great landscapists of these periods would retire to the solitude of mountain recesses and there learn the languages of mountains and clouds, rivers and valleys, trees and birds! They were at one with nature, absorbed in spiritual ecstasy, in absolute contemplation. In a word, the artist identifies himself with the object of his contemplation.

Throughout the centuries, Taoism had gradually degenerated to practices of alchemy and other forms of magic. Hence Feng Shui is in a way a manifestation of this decadent form of Taoism.

To the "masters" of Feng Shui, who practice the art of locating sites for burial, the symbol of the Dragon is of paramount importance. To them the "dragon" stands for power, manifested in the power of the *waters* and the *clouds,* ever moving, ever changing, now destroying, now fructifying and preserving. With a compass in his hands, a "master" would wander about in a mountainous region, in search of the "vital arteries of the dragon," which may be taken as the symbolic expression of what geologists call the dips and strikes of the rock formations of a syncline or anticline.

These "masters" are generally respected by the villagers as persons who know the secrets of nature. Further, it

may be mentioned that the feat, with which they, the "masters," could sometimes locate a site for the digging of a well, greatly enhanced the esteem held by the villagers for them.

Now I wish to cite a peculiar case concerning my friend Dr. Wong Wen-hao, who for many years held important government positions, as Minister of Economic Affairs and Premier of the Cabinet; and now, to my regret, working as an official in Communist China. He is a well-known geologist and was for many years Director of the Geological Survey of China. At the time the event happened he was Chief Secretary of the Government in Nanking. The following narrative is a summary of a letter written to me, describing an event for which he found no normal explanation.

On February 16, 1954, Dr. Wong Wen-hao, while on his way from Nanking to Wukong, was critically injured in a motor car crash. From that date until April sixth he remembers nothing in the hospital where he was treated for brain concussion, resulting in prolonged unconsciousness. Though unconscious, he spoke repeatedly, and what he said was so strange that those around his bedside made notes of it.

One day he called suddenly for pen and paper and then wrote with great difficulty the three Chinese characters "Sze." On another day he complained to his nurse that a woman was pressing him so hard that he wanted her driven away. Meanwhile his son-in-law and the sister of his son-in-law in Shanghai tried a planchette to see if they could get some help from the spirits. The script, announcing the presence of Dr. Wong's mother, contains the words "Wong," "Deceased concubine" and "Make the grave early," all in Chinese characters.

When this script was sent to Dr. Wong's father in Ningpo, he made inquiries among his relatives there. He discovered that his grandfather started business in Shanghai through the financial help of his concubine by the name of Sze. After his death, the concubine, being young and having some difficulties with the family, entered a nun-

nery. After her death, her body was given a crude burial and the customary tablet bearing her name was set up only in the nunnery and not in the family hall. Further, it was discovered that in previous years when any one of the family lay dying, he would say the words "the concubine Sze has come to demand the removal of her tablet into our family and the transfer of her coffin for reburial, otherwise the consequence will be death."

At the suggestion of some one in the village, Dr. Wong's father consulted a peasant woman known for her mediumistic powers who gave the following message from Sze: "I had repeatedly, in times past, demanded an honorable burial from the family but without success. This time, with the help of two other spirits, I succeeded in causing the collision of his (Dr. Wong's) car." Further she added that if her demands were not acceded to this time, he would die.

Consequently, Dr. Wong's father, although not a believer in ghosts, but in a state of depression, contracted a loan to cover the expense of a reburial of Sze's coffin and the setting up of her tablet in the ancestral hall. Three days after the new burial had been solemnized, Dr. Wong regained consciousness. It may be added that the British physician who had frankly given up hope for his recovery, ascribed the sudden change to a special act of God, a miracle.

In conclusion I may add that whatever view we may hold to explain paranormal phenomena in general, we must recognize the fact of the reality of an Unseen World, beyond physics, that is beyond our ordinary sensory perception. It is indeed a "new world" whose *terra incognita* is now being investigated by parapsychologists everywhere.

As the drumbeats grew louder, the oracle chanted accurate predictions of future happenings.

HIMALAYAN ORACLE

Wilfrid Noyce

Among really high mountains many things seem possible which in the plains would be absurd. I have only once found myself in Tibet, and then only for two days, above the snow-line. But I knew then, looking over the endless brown and gray plains, capped with fairy castles of snow, that on this highest upland of the world strange things could happen: things which defy both physical laws and the elaborate systems that western scientists build for western man. Later, in Sola Khumbu, the district of Nepal that lies in the shadow of Everest, I saw black dots in the great rock faces high above; caves, so the Sherpas said, where anchorites lived for years and in which they could perform miracles.

The atmosphere of Hunza back in 1960 was different. Hunza is a tiny mountain state in the Karakoram, the giant range in which the northwestern Himalayas culminate, and which includes the second summit of the world. Lying itself in Pakistan, Hunza tails off toward mountainous China to the northeast and mountainous Russia to the northwest. The country is really a narrow strip bordering the Hunza River, a tributary of the Gilgit, which itself is a tributary of the Indus. It is some eighty miles long and nowhere more than a few miles wide.

There is nothing extraordinary about that. Perhaps the country is unusually beautiful: terraced fields of corn with poplars, apricots and walnuts along its paths. A land of "just enough" where every square foot is cultivated,

because the mountains, going up to over 24,000 feet, hem it on one side, while the great torrent, two hundred feet deep in its crumbling bed, is a barrier on the other. Beyond the torrent lies the state of Nagar, an old enemy. And one might pass the Hunzas by as an ordinary, hard-working hill people—until one looks at them.

Hunzas are tall and often handsome, particularly the women, in an aquiline way. That is a little strange. It is much stranger that their hair and eyes are very often light, and one would take many of them for Europeans. To look at, they are unlike any Eastern people that I know, and where they come from is a mystery. They themselves believe firmly that they are descended from three wandering soldiers of Alexander the Great; or even, as one legend has it, from Alexander himself and a fairy who descended from the mountains specially to create the Hunza race. Certainly their language, Burushaski, is unlike that of any other Indo-European people. The nearest language to it in the world, according to Mrs. E. O. Lorimer, author of *Language-Hunting in the Karacoram* (London, 1939), is Welsh.

This kinship with the Greek and the Welsh, both nations that have honored the bardic and prophetic, gave to our experience of the Hunza oracle a particular zest. As I have said, we did not expect him here, in the green fields 8000 feet up, of Baltit, the seat of government, where we were staying. The reason for our surprise may simply have been that we were on our way back from an expedition: we had climbed a mountain of some 25,400 feet and lived for weeks on bare glaciers. Therefore Hunza, with its grapes and peaches and palace, seemed more civilized than it in fact was. We had lost our acclimatization to the weird and wonderful. But I am more inclined to think that we only saw one part of Hunza, indeed less than half its extent. A whole strip of it reaches toward China, to the northeast, and this we did not see. We did know that the *bitan,* or oracle, came from a village some way off.

It was the *Mir,* or Ruler, who offered us the spectacle of a bitan. The Mir is absolute lord of his people and told

us himself that since a treaty with Pakistan, only foreign affairs, defense and communications come under Pakistan control. The present Mir has travelled widely and knows Europe, particularly Britain and the South of France. He did not look a person addicted to primitive beliefs. To our disappointment, he was dressed generally in bow tie, sports jacket and flannel trousers made for him in the West End of London. In his country he is the Lord, the father of his people, and what he says goes.

On the afternoon on which the bitan was summoned to perform, we were bidden to tea at the Palace. Here the Mir and his Rani entertained us royally at many a meal during our stay. The performance, or ceremony, was to take place on the volleyball ground just below. (At this game, second only to polo, the expedition had been defeated by the Mir and his palace staff in the best of three fierce matches.) The idea of an oracle holding forth under such conditions seemed as improbable as a prophet in Piccadilly.

At tea the Mir's nephew explained to us that bitans are ordinary people, but recognized early in life by certain signs. They will not drink cow's milk, and are revolted by anything coming from a cow. A bitan suffers from headaches and is very fearful; he gets easily unconscious—which means that he is trying to escape into fairyland. When a person becomes a full-fledged bitan, so to speak, he is given the sweet blood of a small goat to drink. This blood he sucks from the head of the goat, and to him it tastes like milk. Once a man is recognized as a bitan he lives an odd life. He does a job, apart from the special occasions when he is called upon to perform, but is regarded by his fellows as different; not at all as superior, but as a being set apart by his own gift.

It was time for the performance. Before it, we were told, the bitan has asked the Mir for permission to perform, since the ordeal of the juniper smoke can kill, and no human life may be taken without the Mir's permission. On one side of the volleyball ground sat the Mir, his relatives and ourselves. Round the other three sides were seated the men and boys of the district, encouraged by four

or five "cheer masters" with long sticks to keep up a continuous singing and shouting. On the slopes above, among the apricot trees, women and girls fluttered like gay butterflies, watching from afar. In front of the crowd opposite to us were squatted the four musicians, performing throughout on two drums and two homemade flutes.

At last four men appeared, dragging into the arena a figure dressed in white, who seemed to be resisting violently. The bitan was a small man, sharp featured—an inconspicuous Hunza, one would have said. A big tray of burning juniper twigs was put before him, emitting a strong smoke. Two stalwarts seized his head and held it down, in the smoke. Every so often he seemed to wriggle free and rear up, looking at the sky. The drums beat. The people shouted. After almost five minutes of this he broke away and ran with his hands behind him round and round. The movements of the dance which followed were strange, stylized and yet individual, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, sometimes with the arms outstretched like the wings of a bird, sometimes held close to his sides. Sometimes he turned and twisted, writhing almost as if to be free of something. He kept looking at the sky.

After perhaps ten minutes the bitan ran to the drums and put his ear against each of them in turn. The champion drummer of the valley, whom I had met in his village the day before, he appeared to reject; and the champion drummer looked none too pleased. He held his ear to the other drum, and after a minute or two burst into a singsong chant, remaining bent, with arm stretched out behind him. Comparative silence reigned until he had finished. Then he started another wild dance, returning to the drum to listen and to chant. In all, he did three dances, varying a little in theme but not greatly so far as I could see, and uttered three chants.

Finally, at no obvious prearranged point, a headman came out and seized him with both arms round the waist. He was dragged struggling from the arena, where men stood ready to splash his face with water.

The Mir's nephew explained. The bitan looks skyward, because that is where the fairies are. His motions are a

reflection of *their* dance. Once, he said, a bitan kept trying to dance on one leg. The reason for this was that his fairy had only one leg, and he must dance that way too. He put his ear to each of the drums, to find out through which of them the fairies would be speaking to him.

Then he chanted what the fairies told him, not in Burushaski but in Shina, the language of Gilgit and of villages down the valley. There is great trouble in Kashmir ran the first chant. But the leaders will meet and things will turn out well, continued the second.

"He's been reading his papers," I said. We too could have prophesied that Mr. Nehru would be coming to Pakistan, on September 19, to discuss Kashmir, among other things, with Field Marshal Ayub Khan.

"No, he is an uneducated man," said the Mir's nephew. "He knows nothing of Kashmir and he has never heard of Mr. Nehru. The fairies have told him."

The third chant concerned the Mir. The Mir is a good ruler, ran the theme, and he looks after his people. But there are bad men who take advantage of his generosity. They must not do that, or trouble will come.

I did not like to inquire too far into this piece of local politics.

Next day the bitan came to see our doctor, complaining of a fever. This had prevented him, he said, from dancing as well as he would have liked. He had a carpet to sell. Seen close up, he was a very ordinary man—apart from his eyes. They seemed to be looking far away, over the top of you. Or was that imagination? You may take him as you will. I am no expert on oracles, but he intrigued me. The Delphic oracle of Greece, too, was inspired by smoke, and here these Hunzas of the Grecian profile seemed to be following the Pythian footsteps. Even the ambiguous terms of the prophecies, like those of many a fortune teller, had some kinship with the Delphic riddler. Our expedition, comprising a schoolmaster, a plumber, a physical education instructor, a shopfitter, a botanist, a research student and a doctor, was divided.

Most suspended judgment. Don Whillans, the plumber, was frankly amused.

"The funniest part of the whole thing is the way they believe it themselves. They really do, you know."

That evening the Mir told us of a poltergeist that had troubled his relatives and particularly, I think, his sister. All manner of traps and tricks had worried the poor lady into a prolonged illness, despite every attempt at exorcism. But their belief in oracles and poltergeists has nothing to do, so far as I know, with the official religion of the Hunzas, who are an Ismaeli sect of the Muslim faith. The Nagars, across the river, are strict Shias and go directly to the Prophet as the one source and fountainhead of their religion. They are a gloomy people, wearing sombre clothes and never drinking strong drink. They live on a north-facing slope, and the Hunzas, who live opposite on a south-facing slope have a saying: "Their caps are black and their cloaks are black and their mosques are black and by Allah their hearts are black."

The Hunzas are a cheerful folk and brew their own liquor (I am not saying that drink is either good or bad for the character). They acknowledge the Aga Khan as their Prophet and supreme spiritual head. Once again, through this acknowledgement, a breath from the outer world seems to blow in among this charmingly simple people. August 1960 the Hunza River flooded heavily and the jeep track recently constructed up the valley had been washed away in many places. As we walked to Gilgit, after bidding farewell to an unforgettable landscape, we found gangs at work with pick and shovel. On October 20 the then Aga Khan was to pay his very first visit to the state of Hunza. And there was no road! Already, while we were at Baltit, an airplane had tried unsuccessfully to land on the polo ground. But with six weeks to go, and strong arms, there was still hope.

We left them at it, and I still do not know whether the Aga Khan got through. Whether he did or no, he was a symbol to me of the two faces of Hunza. A person sophisticated perhaps, a man with one foot in the west. But he was still the spiritual leader of a remote little mountain

people in an odd corner of Asia. He would still deliver to them the traditional sermon. We could not help hoping that with time and better communications the sophisticated would not obliterate the primitive; we hoped that the bitans of Hunza would survive.

The young Australian native lay dying of a curse, and modern medicine was helpless.

THEY SING PEOPLE TO DEATH

Nicholas Wainwright

The Australian aboriginal tribes are considered to be the most primitive people on earth. In many respects they resemble Stone Age man as he roamed the land thousands of years ago. Yet, no matter how primitive their mode of life, limited intelligence or not, they have distinct tribal laws and taboos. Each eligible female, for instance, must marry the man chosen for her by the chief, or king, of the tribe. If she refuses, or marries someone else, the *kurdaitcha* or witch doctor, will lose little time in "singing her to death."

This curse is put into effect in the following manner. The kurdaitcha chants daily before a piece of magic bone, intoning the words: "May your blood turn to stone. May your bones become rotten and crumble." They keep this up for at least a month. The person at whom the bone has been pointed, we are told, soon starts to sicken and eventually dies. No medicine on earth can save her.

Many cases of this sort have been reported in Australia during the past thirty years. According to Professor A. P. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology, Sydney University, and authority on aboriginal customs, there is usually nothing at all wrong with the victims, and although doctors might be able to combat the physical symptoms of the sickness, they are powerless to fight the psychological effect of the curse. In his opinion the only cure is for their medicine man to convince them that the curse has been lifted. In other words, it is a case of mind over matter.

A significant incident, reported in the *Sydney Sun,* April 1957, was that of Charlie Lya Wulumu, a nineteen-year-old native, who was admitted to Darwin Hospital in a dying condition. He gave the doctors to understand that one of his tribesmen had "sung him to death." He had apparently been wandering in the bush for four or five days after the curse had been put on him. A creeping paralysis affected his arms, legs, chest, and throat during that period.

In order to help him breathe, he was placed in an iron lung, but he showed little or no improvement. On hearing of his plight, a well-known Sydney stage hypnotist wired an offer to relieve the psychologically induced paralysis, but the doctors were not convinced that he could be of any assistance to them.

They were finally able to assure Wulumu that the curse had been lifted, and he immediately rallied. He was eventually discharged from the hospital, but rumor has it that it might not be long before the kurdaitcha of his tribe will set out to counter the white man's magic with a stronger curse, which will involve remaining in hiding for the entire period of the fresh "singing to death."

In order to make doubly sure that a spell will work, the medicine man will have no contact with any other human being. Nor will he wash himself. Every night he will sleep with the magic bone under his head until he dreams of his victim, whereupon he will immediately rise, seal each end of the bone with beeswax so that the soul of the latter is "imprisoned" inside the bone, and then cast it into a blazing fire. At the moment the bone is destroyed the doomed man is supposed to die, in horrible agony.

One of these "evil-eye" murders concerned an entire native family in the far north of South Australia. Nita Smith, a twenty-year-old native girl employed as a domestic at a sheep station in Anna Creek, flouted a kingly edict and married Andy Smith, an aboriginal shearer at the same station. Consequently the young couple, their ten-months-old baby, the bride's fourteen-year-old nephew

Roy, and her parents were condemned to death by the kurdaitcha.

The baby was the first to die. It was found buried in some sand-hills not far from the sheep station and had seemingly died of suffocation. Roy, Mrs. Smith's nephew, was admitted into Port Augusta Hospital in a dying condition. He had been found lying on the ground unconscious, not far from a tribal meeting site.

The police arrested the tribal king and the kurdaitcha but the terrified young aboriginal woman refused to identify them as the men who "pointed the bone" at her. She did, however, make no secret of the fact that she was the next member of the family fated to die. For, as Professor Elkin states: "When a man believes he has been sung to death, nothing much can be done to help him."

"In black, green or scarlet masks, in extraordinary costumes, with fangs, talons or claws, with fierce, inhuman screams. . . ."

DEVIL DANCERS OF CEYLON

Santha Rama Rau

Supernatural affairs had never really absorbed me until I lived for three months in the small walled town of Galle, on the south coast of Ceylon. I had gone to Ceylon with my three-year-old son largely to escape the steamy monsoon season of Bombay in a midsummer holiday at the beach. Ceylon, of course, is hot, too, but its rains are more equitably divided through the year, and even though Galle is only a couple of degrees north of the equator, there is always a fresh wind off the sea.

Galle has a climate that suits me particularly well—a climate for cotton dresses and bare feet, for long afternoon siestas, for idling about, for wandering down the beach after dark and finding that the nighttime sea is warmer than the air above it. It was only a day or two after I had moved into the New Oriental Hotel (" 'New'!" the manager used to say to me. "That always makes me laugh. It's the oldest hotel in Ceylon—dates from Dutch colonial days") that I discovered that this was also a climate for the pleasing chill of magic.

It all started after dinner one night, when my room boy brought me a carafe of water to put beside my bed and remarked, "Madam mustn't be disturbed if she hears music. It's only the dance party."

I thanked him for his solicitude and watched him walk barefoot down the wide corridor that led from my open door to the staircase. He had surprised me with his mes-

sage about a dance, for the hotel seemed too sleepy and unfashionable to bother with such entertainment, and so did the twenty-odd people whom I had already learned to recognize as the residents—the two retired civil servants who no longer had the money to live in style in Europe, the Singhalese couple with their numerous children who were spending the school holiday in Galle, the elderly British women with their bird's-nesty hair and their sketch pads, the three young men on a shooting trip, and the rest.

I climbed into bed and turned out the light. Lying in the wide bed, on a hard, cool mattress, I looked around my room. The dim light from my windows doubled and flattened the huge black beams across the ceiling, and at that hour the whitewashed walls had none of the clean reassurance of daylight.

Reed blinds rattled at the windows of the corridor outside, and the broad teak planks of my floor settled down for the night with occasional creaks and rustles. Somewhere on the floor below, a door slammed. But I couldn't hear a sound from the dance downstairs, and rather sleepily I decided that they really knew how to build houses in *those* days.

The next morning, on my way to the beach, I stopped at the hotel desk to ask for letters. The manager was there, busily typing something at his office table, and since I had already acquired that bemused, expansive mood that comes over one on a beach holiday, I congratulated him on the peace and charm of his hotel. "Do you know," I said, "I didn't even hear a murmur of last night's dance. I think that's really astonishing in a town as quiet as Galle."

He looked up, smiling in a slightly irritated way. "The boys have been talking again," he said.

"All he said—" I began.

"We never have dances here," the manager told me patiently. "Unless, of course, someone wants to hire the lounge for a wedding and a party afterward."

"But he—"

"I know, I know," the manager interrupted. "He told you to pay no attention to the music. It's an old story, and so far no one has ever been worried by it."

"Oh, I wasn't *worried*."

"You see, this is a very old building—one of the oldest in Galle—so stories grow up."

He rested his arms on the top of the typewriter and continued to smile pleasantly. "It used to be a private house. That must have been more than a hundred and fifty years ago, when the Dutch still ruled Ceylon. The lady who used to live here was— Well, she must have had money, because it's a big house for a single woman, and we know that she used to entertain a great deal. Her husband died here, but she stayed on—didn't want to return to Holland, and who can blame her? And she continued to give her parties.

"Very gay they were, as you can imagine—silks and satins, and the young officers in dress uniform. Why, the reception room covered all of this ground floor. Well, I daresay the other ladies in the colony didn't entirely approve—I mean, being next door to the Dutch church, and all—and I wouldn't be surprised if the stories about her started then."

"I see," I said, quite entranced by the picture of beautiful, splendidly dressed women sweeping down the curving teak stairs, of a string orchestra, and spruce young men in blue and gold. "What happened to her?"

"Well, nothing much. She grew old, and the parties became quieter, and in the end she, too, died here. She must have been lonely at the end, because it turned out that she had no one to leave the house to. It went, with the rest of her property, to distant relatives in Holland.

"They never came out here, I'm told. They must have thought of her as something of a black sheep. They sold the house without ever seeing it. The Army bought it and turned it into officer's quarters." He crinkled his eyes and added, in a mildly naughty tone, "Rather appropriate, don't you think? I mean since she had . . . *entertained* so many of them before."

I went off to the beach, still pleased by the idea of her daring dance parties, and determined to listen on future

nights for the ghostly sounds of those remote strings, the chatter of distant Dutch voices, the whisper of brocades down the wide corridors.

Most afternoons, after my child woke from his siesta, I used to take him for a walk on the ramparts and fortifications of Galle. These old walls, overgrown with short, springy grass, are now disintegrating slowly toward the sea. The ancient, crumbling turrets, left over from the sixteenth century, when the Portuguese, before the Dutch, ruled Ceylon, are lined with moss, and goats skip among their crenellations.

My son used to run after the goats, and I used to run after my son. Warm and out of breath, we would usually end up at the lighthouse, which is built on top of the ramparts and overlooks both the eastern bay of Galle and the immense expanse of ocean to the south. Very often on these early evenings we would meet a Mr. da Souza and his five-year-old son soberly playing cricket together on the clear stretch of grass near the lighthouse.

My child would immediately abandon the goats in favor of the cricket ball, and, rather to my surprise, young Francis da Souza was very patient with him, in spite of their two-year age difference, and would allow him to swipe wildly at the air with the bat while he bowled slow, easy balls to him. Mr. da Souza and I sat on the lighthouse steps and watched the children as we exchanged polite, impersonal comments about our surroundings. He was a native of Galle, a short, dark Singhalese with heavily oiled hair and even, small features.

He spoke a strongly accented, rather careful English, and his remarks to me were always gently instructive, displaying a fondness for factual detail, and a schoolmarmish mind softened by the usual courtesy of his people. Once, as we gazed at the huge breakers crashing below us against the fortress walls, he said, "It is extraordinary, is it not, that these waves come rolling up to us all the way from Antarctica."

"Really? Isn't there any land south of Ceylon?"

"There is no land *directly* south," he corrected. "No land at all."

Gradually, by oblique questions or direct assumptions ("Francis, I suppose, goes to an English school? He plays cricket so well," or "Someone like you, Mr. da Souza, who understands the workings of the government administration . . ."), I learned that Mr. da Souza was a minor official in the Government Accounts Department, stationed in Galle. His wife had died a couple of years before. Francis was his only child. His sister kept house for him.

They lived in one of the new, cheaply built houses in the sprawling development of New Galle, a community that had expanded along the edge of the bay outside the fat gray walls of the old city. I also learned that he was a Catholic, and that his family had been Catholic for generations. ("You see," he said to me once, with a smile, "the Portuguese colonists were successful in at least one of their aims.") However, in spite of all this general information I acquired about him, Mr. da Souza did not, in truth, interest me very much until we began talking about devils and magic.

After three weeks, our informal rendezvous at the lighthouse had become such a daily habit that I was surprised one evening when Mr. da Souza and his son failed to appear. Several days then went by without a sign of them. I wondered if Francis was sick. Or perhaps Mr. da Souza had leave and the family had gone away for a holiday, although I couldn't imagine why anyone would leave such a perfect holiday place as Galle.

Eventually, after an absence of about a week, he did reappear at the lighthouse, and while neither he nor I mentioned the interruption of his normal routine, I could see that something had happened, for he was restless and preoccupied. On the day of his return, he was too distracted even to watch the children playing cricket, or to remark, as he often had, on how odd a nearby Buddhist temple looked amid the surrounding eighteenth-century European architecture, or to speculate about what life might have been like in this enclosed fortress before the great walls had become no more than a charming addition to the atmosphere of the town.

He couldn't talk and didn't want to listen, and an uneasy, unfamiliar silence fell between us. Suddenly he sprang up from the lighthouse steps and said commandingly, "Come, I will show you some of the sights of Galle."

Obediently, I got up, although I had seen the sights of Galle many times. It is a small town; it takes only about twenty minutes to walk the length of the point on which it is built, from the great Indian Ocean on the south to the huge gate that leads to the inland fields, jungles, and mountains, or to walk from the docks of the Galle harbor to the crumbling ramparts on the turbulent western bay.

However, Mr. da Souza clearly wanted to walk, so we set off down the road from the lighthouse toward the beautiful square that used to be the center of town, trailed by the children, who kept dropping the cricket ball in the gutter and waving the bat dangerously. Throughout the walk, Mr. da Souza made comments about the buildings or streets that we passed, but the usual gently informative joy in the town and its history was absent from his voice. "Scarcely changed in two hundred years," he said abruptly, waving a hand toward the slender arcades around the square, where previously he would have peopled them with the bustling, elegant foreign life of the colonial days.

When we passed a crowded alley of open-fronted shops where men sat on the floor polishing a cloudy glitter into piles of moonstones, or sorting opals, or working tortoise shell into elaborate hairpins, Mr. da Souza said nothing at all. Still puzzled by his unhappy silence, I tried to amuse myself by mentally reciting the foreign names for Ceylon that Mr. da Souza had taught me—the heady residue of ancient history: Taprobane, Tenerisim, Ilanare, Serendib.

We turned in to the wider street that sweeps downhill between the Governor's house and the old bell tower, and stopped at last before the eastern gate. It is always an impressive moment when you see a sunlit scene through the tunnellike darkness of an archway. We stood staring at the harbor and the shining bay framed by the deep and lovely gate cut in the outer walls of Galle, and I said conventionally, "It's magical, isn't it?"

Mr. da Souza turned to me alertly. "Magical?" he repeated. Then, in a different tone, he said, "Yes, there is too much magic here."

"Mr. da Souza," I said, unable to disguise my curiosity any longer, "you are obviously worried about something. Do come up to the hotel and have a drink with me and tell me about it." He looked at me coldly for a second, and I was afraid that I had offended him, so I quickly added, "Or don't tell me about it, if you prefer."

"Thank you very much," Mr. da Souza said formally. "I would like to have a drink with you."

At the hotel, waiters brought a table and chairs out onto the lawn for us, and we sat with our backs to the sunset, under an enormous rain tree, gazing out to the darkening bay below us. The children played and chattered with the group of vendors that always hung about the hotel steps, examining models of outrigger fishing boats and prodding at tissue-paper packets of star sapphires and water sapphires. Mr. da Souza ordered beer and sipped it in silence.

"Something happened a week ago," he said at last, "and I am very troubled. We are good Catholics, you understand, and that makes it yet more difficult. I will tell you about it." But then he stopped and said nothing at all for a while. "My sister is not imaginative," he announced suddenly. "She will make a good wife to somebody one day. She's a sensible housekeeper, and she has taken good care of the child and me.

"She used to laugh a great deal. That's it." He looked straight at me to give his words emphasis. "I'm sure that's it. She should never have laughed at him."

"At Francis?" I asked uncertainly.

"No, no." He waved a hand in an impatient gesture. "At that man—that Dutchman. A week ago—last Tuesday—she was returning from church, from the Vespers service, and on the walk back to our house she passed an old building. It is used as a godown now—a rather dilapidated little warehouse, actually—but it dates from Dutch times, I can assure you of that.

"At first I thought she was mistaken when she told me

what she had seen. It was twilight, you understand, and she could easily have been mistaken, and it seemed so unlikely that she should see him when she was returning from church and was filled with goodness." He shook his head sadly. "The man was standing on top of the wall of the godown and he was dressed in the manner of the colonial Dutch—tight breeches, short jacket, buckled shoes, and all that. But she didn't recognize the clothes. She takes no interest in history. She thought he just looked funny standing there in those strange clothes, and so she laughed at him.

"I told her, when she described him to me, that she should not have laughed. It was impolite, whoever he was."

I said, "Do you mean that you think the man was a ghost?"

"Can there be any doubt?"

"Well, in that tricky light . . ."

"Ah, I, too, hoped it was only a question of the light. But that night the man came to our house. He must have followed her."

"Came to your *house?* Did you see him?"

"I couldn't see him, but she could. Suddenly she stared at one corner of the ceiling and screamed. 'He is there!' she said. 'He is looking at me and laughing!'

"As you can well believe, I was very distressed. I tried to tell her she was imagining things, but she wouldn't listen to me and ran into her bedroom. But the Dutchman appeared again, in a corner of the bedroom ceiling.

"He appeared always, you see, at the same height as when she had first seen him, on the wall of the godown. I have never seen anyone in a true frenzy before, but that was my sister's state. She ran out to the veranda, but there he was again, floating above the veranda railing. She began to throw herself about in terror, shouting and crying. Her hair came down and she tore her sari. She was in such a condition that she would not have felt it if you had jabbed a pin in her. She found a stick somewhere and tried to strike the ghost. She made so much

noise that the neighbors came over to see what was happening.

They tried to help me to calm her, but she wouldn't listen to us, or couldn't hear us. It was terrible. At last she fell exhausted to the floor, and ever since then she has been incapable of coherent speech. She either lies quite stiffly on her bed, without moving, or leaps up and screams and pleads with the laughing Dutchman in the corner of her ceiling. Poor Francis now has no clean shirts to wear.

"The neighbors have been very kind and have come in to cook the meals. But the house has not been cleaned. The chickens have been fed only when someone has remembered. And even Francis's pet dog has run away." He paused and looked into his empty beer glass. "What to do?" he said, in soft despair. "What to do?"

"Perhaps you should take your sister to a psychiatrist," I suggested after a moment. "If you know of a good one in Ceylon."

"That is what they would do in India?" he inquired sharply.

"Well, not in India so much. I was thinking more of America."

"You have lived for long in America?"

"A few years, yes."

"Yes." He nodded with a sort of gloomy resignation. "There, too, they believe in magic."

"It's not really considered magic," I said carefully. "I mean it's supposed to be a science."

"That is what the devil dancers tell me also." He caught my look of astonishment, and added, "That theirs, too, is a science. Like psychiatry, you understand. They cure such—ills. I believe some of these men are wise, for they have seen many afflicted people." Suddenly he burst out, "But I am a good Catholic! How can I have dealings with magic?"

"You couldn't bring yourself to try psychiatry—to accept it as medical treatment?" I asked.

"Or a devil dance," he insisted. "If I accept one, why not the other?"

"Surely they're a bit different."

But he shook his head. "All magic. You try to cure what you cannot see. Where is the soul? I ask of you. Has it blood? Flesh? Cells? How can I believe in medical treatments for the troubles of the soul? I must think. I must *think*."

"Do let me know if I can help," I said rather stupidly.

"You are already too kind."

"I could look after Francis in the afternoons."

"I could not trouble you."

For the next few days, I didn't see Mr. da Souza, and though I often thought about him and wondered whether he had solved his problem, I didn't have quite the nerve to telephone him at his office.

On Sunday morning, however, while I was standing on the veranda trying to decide whether there was time to get to the beach and back before it rained, Mr. da Souza, with Francis beside him, drove up to the hotel steps in a small horse cart. He walked slowly toward me while my son rushed out to talk to the horse and to Francis and the driver.

"Good morning," Mr. da Souza said abruptly, and then he was silent for several moments, watching the congregation file into the Dutch church next door. At last he said, "Will you come to a village with me? It isn't far."

Before I could ask him where we were going and why, he had turned away and was striding back to the cart. I followed him, thinking that he would probably explain once we got started.

The children sat in front, next to the driver, while we sat with our backs to them, watching the receding road. Mr. da Souza said nothing at all as we rattled down the short, steep hill to the inland gate of Galle, passed the large circular green outside the old city, where the Galle boys usually played football of an afternoon, and turned in to the road that follows the curve of the eastern bay and leads to New Galle. By that time, intimidated by his silence, I couldn't bring myself to ask any questions. Then, as we drove past the Catholic church in New Galle

and heard the bell ringing and saw the last stragglers hurrying up the path, he nodded toward the building and remarked bitterly, "You will see what I have come to!"

We must have driven three or four miles before we left the main road, turning first in to a narrow side road and then in to a lane. Finally, we went bumping and jingling between the palms of a coconut grove, to stop quite suddenly at a sort of village. A few small, square houses, with whitewashed walls and coconut-frond thatches, stood around a clearing of beaten earth. We climbed down from the horse cart and stood about rather helplessly. There seemed to be nobody around except two boys, who were crouching on one side of the clearing and playing some elaborate game with sticks and stones. They looked up from this absorbing ritual when the driver yelled at them, and then fled behind the biggest of the houses. "This is the devil dancers' village," Mr. da Souza told me. "I hope you do not mind that I brought you."

"Not at all, not at all," I said, inadequately.

Within a few moments, the door of the biggest house opened and an old man in a red-and-green checked sarong and a white shirt came toward us. He was tall, and looked taller still because he stood very straight and walked with the easy confidence of a much younger man.

He was smiling pleasantly, but I thought I detected under his affable manner a thoughtful, analytical expression. I noticed that his hair was dressed in the old-fashioned way—scraped up into a bun high on the back of his head, and held in place by a semicircular tortoise-shell comb.

There must have been some tiny brilliants embedded in the tortoise shell, for as he moved, the sunlight flashed on the comb, giving it the authority of a crown. His gestures were old-fashioned, too. He ignored Mr. da Souza's outstretched hand, with a look too fleeting to be called contempt, and, instead, brought his own hands together, palm to palm, in the traditional Singhalese greeting.

The alert, considering eyes took in my beach clothes and Mr. da Souza's western suit. The old man spoke a few words to Mr. da Souza in Singhalese and then

snapped his fingers and said something sharply to the two boys behind him. They immediately scuttled into the house and came struggling out again with three rickety wooden chairs, which they placed some distance apart in the middle of the clearing. Mr. da Souza indicated where I should sit, and took the chair next to me, and then the old man sat down facing us.

The courtesies in Singhalese continued, and since I couldn't understand what the two men were saying, I watched the boys getting coconuts for us. One of them hitched up his sarong and, with a neat economy of movement, shinned up a palm bole, produced a knife from the cloth at his waist, and cut down three coconuts.

The other stood underneath, caught the coconuts, stripped off the outer fibre, sliced off the top of the inner casing, and brought one to each of us. I sat there and sipped the thin, sweetish liquid, keeping an eye on Francis and my son, and half listening to Mr. da Souza, who seemed to be conducting complicated negotiations with the old chief of the devil dancers. I found that I was enjoying the warm, moist morning and the pleasing cadences of a language I didn't understand, but I did wonder occasionally why Mr. da Souza had brought me along on this expedition.

He talked away earnestly, with frequent emphatic movements of his hands. The old man nodded from time to time, or interrupted with a few words, and quite often glanced at me with polite amusement. Once he said, in halting English, "Tourist, is it?" and I smiled and nodded.

Mr. da Souza said to me, "I hope you won't mind . . ."

"Of course not," I assured him. "After all, I *am* a tourist."

Later, the old man turned to me again, and said, "Seventy rupees. All right?"

I looked nervously at the two men and began to wish that I spoke Singhalese. "Seventy rupees for what?" I asked sternly.

But before the old man could reply, Mr. da Souza

burst into another torrent of Singhalese. He was answered heatedly. He retorted with scorn. Just as they seemed about to reach the point of real anger, the old man spread out his hands and said sadly to me, "All right. Fifty rupees."

"What *for?*" I insisted.

"For we do you the dance."

"You do the dance for *me?*"

Mr. da Souza seemed most upset. "Naturally, I will handle the payment," he said.

"I see," I said, not seeing at all.

"I had to tell him that you were a tourist who wanted to see one of Ceylon's celebrated devil dances," he continued rapidly and in a low voice. "I was not able to ask for myself. Do you mind?"

"Well . . . no." I understood at last why my presence had been necessary for this visit. Since Mr. da Souza was known in Galle as a good Catholic, it would certainly have been embarrassing for him to have the devil dancers for himself. A favor to a visiting tourist, however, was quite another matter.

In the horse cart, on the way back to the hotel, Mr. da Souza asked again, anxiously, "You're sure you do not mind that I arranged it in this way?"

"On the contrary," I said, feeling by this time rather excited about the whole thing. "I'm looking forward to the dances. I believe in magic, you know."

"I know you do. I knew it when you recommended psychiatry for my sister."

I started to protest again over his confusion of the two, but Mr. da Souza went on talking quite cheerfully.

"The old man made some trouble to begin with. He said that it was not proper to do the dances unless there was a patient, an illness to be cured. So I told him that my sister chanced to be ill, and we could therefore hold the dances most suitably at my house, and manage to satisfy your interest at the same time."

"It all worked out very neatly, didn't it?" I said, with a touch of annoyance at the way he had used me.

"Yes, didn't it?" He smiled at me disarmingly.

I couldn't help asking, "But what made you decide on a devil dance after all?"

"By now," he said thoughtfully, "Francis and I have learned to take care of ourselves, and I have arranged for a servant to look after the house. But with my sister things have become more serious. Yesterday she found an egg."

"An *egg?*"

"Oh, naturally we have eggs in the proper places for eggs—in the kitchen or in the henhouse—but this egg she found in her bedroom. Or so she said, at least."

"Yes, that does seem unusual."

"I do not entirely understand the meaning, but it is certainly a sign of some kind. The old man was very interested in that egg when I told him about it."

Word of our arrangements for the devil dance seemed to spread instantly about Galle. A couple of the room boys in the hotel assured me they would come to watch. The manager said, "I hear you're having a devil dance. I haven't a doubt you'll find it interesting, but—a word to the wise—You won't swallow all the stories they tell you about it, will you?"

"Oh, of course not," I said heartily but without real conviction. I had certainly "swallowed" Mr. da Souza's original story, and now, since he felt happier about devil dancing than about psychiatry, and since the cost was so much less, I had decided that it was very sensible of him to try the best available therapy. Some teen-age boys at the beach with whom we often went swimming had told me that the devil dancers Mr. da Souza had chosen were the most reputable troupe in the area.

On the day of the event, I watched the soft-clouded sky anxiously, hoping that the rain would either hold off entirely or expend itself before nighttime. At half past eight that evening, the two room boys and my son and I all climbed into a horse cart and clattered excitedly off to New Galle and the house of Mr. da Souza.

It turned out to be a conventional square, whitewashed house, set back from a side road, and with a small garden in front. Mr. da Souza was waiting at the gate.

He fussed about us as we dismounted, and he insisted upon paying the horse-cart driver. Smiling, exhilarated, talkative, he seemed entirely different in the Singhalese sarong and shirt that he was wearing in place of his customary white drill trousers and white cotton shirt.

He and his neighbors must have been busy all day erecting the bamboo pavilion that now covered most of the garden space. A strong, thick bamboo trunk was set like a pillar at each corner of the pavilion to hold up a lacy arrangement of palm leaves, which served as a roof. I guessed that the neighborhood children had been sent to pick the flowers that were tucked here and there in the ceiling. There were more flowers—hibiscus, marigolds, and poinsettias—tied to the pillars, which were also wrapped with vines and leaves, making each pillar into a bizarre tree.

At one end of the pavilion was an altar—a high table with round bamboo legs and a slatted bamboo top. The altar was covered with little hills of saffron-colored flowers and pretty, leafy decorations, and around its edge were streamers of palm strips, hanging down almost to the ground, like an odd sort of tablecloth. From each end of the altar a rather crumpled muslin curtain was stretched to a pillar of the pavilion. The three other sides of the pavilion were open to the garden, to the inquisitive stares of passersby on the road, and to the veranda of Mr. da Souza's house.

Immediately in front of the veranda someone had placed a low bed—really just a wooden platform—covered with a white sheet. Two glary kerosene lanterns illuminated the fragile shelter. Already a considerable crowd of friends, neighbors, and uninvited townspeople was standing about watching, and rows of barefoot children sat on the ground along the edges of what proved to be the dance area.

Mr. da Souza and I sat in straight chairs set near the bed, and Francis and my son settled down on the ground with the other children. Mr. da Souza told me that the dancers and musicians had arrived but that nothing could

begin until the preliminary religious ceremonies had been completed.

The headman from the dancers' village and another old man were standing in front of the altar, intoning prayers and mantras, some in Singhalese and some in what I guessed to be Sanskrit. Various people—several of the dancers and several neighbors—were piling offerings of coconuts and fruit and rice on the altar, and from time to time one of the old men would sprinkle these with water.

At the other end of the pavilion, the musicians were unconcernedly spreading a mat on the ground, arranging the drums, and taking their places. A group of singers were already seated nearby.

Then there was a stir behind us, and I turned to see two women helping Mr. da Souza's sister down the veranda steps. She was dressed in a white sari, her hair neatly bound up in a knot at the back of her head. She seemed calm, but she walked stiffly and showed no particular interest in the proceedings. She lay down on the bed, closed her eyes, and turned her face toward the house.

This did not seem to be a gesture of defiance but more one of weariness. She had the blank, uncomprehending look of someone badly shocked, but what impressed me most of all was that she appeared only to want to be left alone. When the two women turned her so that she was facing the pavilion, she did not resist, but she seemed not to be a part of all the fuss and ceremonial excitement around her.

It was now about ten o'clock. The chanting ended and the headman came over to say something in Singhalese to Mr. da Souza. By that time, only Mr. da Souza and I were keeping up the pretense that the dance was being held to satisfy my tourist curiosity, but I still felt entitled by this fictitious position to demand explanations, so the rest of the evening was punctuated with my questions—"What are they doing?" "What did he say?" "*Now* what are they doing?"—and Mr. da Souza's whispered replies.

Now he told me, "The old man wants to know what is the matter with my sister."

"I should have thought it was his job to diagnose the trouble."

"Oh, no. There are certain diseases—like appendicitis, for example—that they do not claim to cure. Can your psychiatrists cure them?"

"I suppose not."

"It is the same."

Mr. da Souza described his sister's experience to the old man, and explained that she suffered from alternate phases of utter withdrawal and great agitation. The old man nodded solemnly, asked a few questions, and then gave a signal to the musicians. The drummer began a strong, cheerful rhythm, the thin, sad sound of a flute joined in, and then, almost indistinguishable from the flute, the voices of the women singers rose.

The dancing started quite briskly, each dancer coming out to the dance area alone to execute a few rapid turns and leaps, and then retiring to the side of the altar. There were six or seven of the dancers, all young men, who wore loose white trousers covered by calf-length skirts, and had bands of small bells strapped to their ankles. They were bare-chested, and their headdresses were made of red cloth, wound tightly over the forehead, with tassels of palm fibre hanging over the ears.

Soon the dancers appeared in twos and threes, and the dancing became faster and more acrobatic. They whirled around the clearing with such speed and in such intricate patterns of movement that it became impossible to distinguish one dancer from another.

The drumming grew louder, the crowd more excited, but when I glanced over at Mr. da Souza's sister, she was lying with her eyes still closed and her face now turned away from the dancing.

There came a moment when the rhythm of the drums changed and the dancers all appeared holding blazing palm-leaf torches. From time to time, as they continued their spins and turns, they would fling a whitish powder —gunpowder, I guessed—on their torches, making sudden sheets of flame.

Some rubbed themselves with red-hot embers, some

appeared with a torch in each hand and described wild circles of fire as they danced around the clearing. Still the figure on the bed lay motionless.

Abruptly the fire dancing came to an end. There was a consultation, conducted in low, worried voices, between Mr. da Souza and the old man. During this pause in the ceremony, all the spectators were served with some rather nasty raspberry soda pop, and the orchestra drank palm beer. As I sipped my soda, I kept watching the sister, who remained shrouded in her white sari and in her silent rejection of all the activity around her.

I was suddenly very sorry for her. Clearly, she was sick. It must have been anything but soothing for her to listen to the relentless drums and to the gasps and shouts of the audience as the torches flared and the dancers stamped across the pavilion.

Perhaps she had greater fortitude than I would have guessed possible, or perhaps she didn't hear any of it at all. From her expression, from her immobility, I couldn't tell; she might have been asleep.

When the performance resumed, two of the dancers appeared dressed as women. Throughout the action that followed, one retained the role of a Singhalese housewife, while the other was sometimes a friend, sometimes a neighbor or a servant or a mother-in-law, as the unfolding dance story required.

Accompanied only by the singers, they went through a long pantomime, of remarkable precision, depicting the daily life, the duties, the joys of a Singhalese woman—the washing of clothes, the cleaning of the house, the peeling and preparing of vegetables, the cooking, the care of the children.

At last the chores are done, the housewife sits down before her mirror, combs and oils her hair, knots it carefully, makes herself beautiful for her husband. At this moment, the mood of his dance was broken by a gasp and a sudden struggling movement from the bed.

The reedy singing of the women stopped. The dancers turned to stare at Mr. da Souza's sister. She sat up and swung her feet to the ground. She said something in a

harsh, demanding voice. I nudged Mr. da Souza. Without looking at me, he said, "She wants to dance."

The old man hurried over and held a palm wand above the sister's head. Then the drums struck up again. The two pantomimists shuffled away, and another dancer, dressed in the male costume, appeared.

He appeared to dance slowly in front of the sister. After a moment or two, she stepped forward, took her place behind the dancer, and started to follow his movements.

The drumming gained speed and complexity, and the sister danced with it, leaving her partner and inventing movements of her own. She twisted away and circled the clearing. Her hair came down. She danced with increasing abandon, tossing her hair back whenever it got in her eyes.

All of us—even the dancers—watched her in silence, not knowing quite what to expect.

Slowly her movements became less frantic, and at last, breathless and shiny with sweat, she sank back on the bed.

It was now well after midnight. The old man again talked to Mr. da Souza, who then told me that it was time to bring on the eighteen demons. "They are terrifying," he said, "but you must not be distressed. They do good."

"Good demons?"

"No, they are bad, but so frightening that they scare away the other devils."

They were frightening, all right, and I was pleased to see that my child had gone to sleep, leaning limply against Francis. Even the thunderous roll of drums that announced the appearance of each demon failed to wake him.

One by one, in black, green, or scarlet masks, in extraordinary costumes made of thick green leaves, with fangs, with great shocks of black hair, with talons or claws, with fierce, inhuman screams, the demons danced out, and eventually vanished into the enclosing darkness. Through it all, the sister sat upright on the bed and

watched; she trembled from time to time but otherwise showed no expression.

At last, the performance ended, with more prayers and chanting. We got stiffly to our feet as the musicians and dancers started packing up their things. The sister was led back indoors. I looked at my watch, and was astonished to find that it was almost 3 A.M. Sleeping children were picked up, and the crowd dispersed in silence. We got back to the hotel just before dawn.

The next evening, I hurried to the lighthouse, and found Mr. da Souza on the steps. When the children had become absorbed in their cricket game, he turned to me with his old smiling formality. "A fine, clear evening," he said. "We are nearly at the end of the rainy season."

"Will it get much hotter now?" I asked impatiently.

"It will get hot, but the sea becomes more beautiful. It will no longer be this muddy green."

"Mr. da Souza, I *must* ask you. Is she cured?"

He stared at the ground, frowning. "She is silent, but she goes about her business in the house," he said. "I think she is cured."

"Does the old man think so, too?"

"I think he may. He came to the house this morning to collect the rest of his fee, and we talked about my sister. He felt that the point at which she showed interest in the dance was very significant. You remember—how she ignored it all until the dancers were acting out the return of a husband to his wife at the end of the day.

"He prescribed"—Mr. da Souza smiled slightly at the little joke he was about to make—"I suppose you would call it 'treatment.' He said she should get married."

"Does she want to?"

"All women must want to get married," Mr. da Souza said, with a sigh. "I will have to arrange a marriage for her. I should have done so sooner, but I thought only of my own convenience and of Francis. And as a consequence she withdrew from her duties in my house. A woman's duties—the same duties—would appear different to her in her own house."

"You mean her illness was sort of a protest against her position in your house?"

He spread his hands in a helpless gesture. "At least, her illness drew attention to that position."

"But what will happen to you and Francis now?"

"I suppose I could remarry. My sister has often told me that I should, but I never listened. I thought that in saying this she was concerned for my welfare and happiness. I see now that she was also worried about her own. First, I will take her and Francis for a couple of weeks to the hills, to Kandy. When we return, I shall look for a husband for her."

"In that case, I probably won't see you again," I said. "We'll be leaving before you get back."

"Ah, I regret that." He paused as if he were formulating a difficult speech, and then said to me, with utter sincerity, "I must take this occasion, then, to thank you for your good advice. About psychiatry, I mean."

"Or devil dancing."

"Or devil dancing," he agreed, laughing.

Although the shaman is outlawed in New Zealand, psychic experiences are common.

MAGIC AMONG THE MAORI

Lyndon Rose

Different social environments result in different religious attitudes. Certain patterns of attitudes develop and the psychologist interests himself in them so he can learn from them. So the Maori people are of interest to researchers in this field.

These original people of New Zealand are a vigorous branch of the Polynesian race and speak a language closely related to that of the Hawaiians. They have full equality politically, socially and economically with European New Zealanders. And many of them have taken respected places in the professional life of that country.

Today, in one or two remote areas of New Zealand, the Maori still organizes his life somewhat as his ancestors did, along tribal lines. The chiefs still have some power and are often wealthy landowners. As a direct result of the fierce fighting undertaken by their ancestors against the British, they received favorable terms under a peace treaty with Queen Victoria in the mid-nineteenth century.

Maori households are based on the clan rather than the family, and the old people do not encourage European influence except in the form of the more comfortable European-type houses and modern farm equipment.

I was fortunate to visit such a group and work among them with my husband. These Maori live in a small rural community and there are several groups with lineally descended chiefs who are still respected. Because the an-

cient schools of Maori lore exist no longer, the older people are usually looked toward for guidance. Advice is given by them on all sorts of matters because of their prestige and place in the community. This may be on the selling of Maori-owned land, or on religious matters among groups that still follow ancient Maori belief and are not yet Christianized.

So, one cold winter's afternoon in the Urewera country of New Zealand's Bay of Plenty province we went to visit an old chief. Politely, we had left our shoes at the door when we entered the house. Our feet were freezing. Tamarau, a Maori of seventy-nine, sat in his accustomed chair opposite and asked:

"Where's Tatai? Before we talk we get her." Tamarau knew little English. So we usually asked his granddaughter Tatai to accompany us when we visited him, to translate for us.

But that afternoon Tatai had been too sick to come. We told the old man this and he did not comment. Inexpertly, his much younger wife filled in as translator. We left early and returned to our own cottage. Tatai, our house girl, still sat before the fire and complained of her aching back.

"Did you tell my grandfather I am ill?"

"Yes, Tatai. How do you feel now?"

"The pain in my back is the same and I can't walk about."

Tatai had neither the temperature nor the loss of appetite that usually accompany organic disturbances. Only the pain in her back. After tea, her mother arrived and asked to see her. We left them to discuss her illness.

"Have you got a silver threepence, please?" Tatai asked, reappearing in the lounge.

The threepence was produced and Tatai went off again. Later, when her mother left, she rejoined us in front of the fire. She hobbled in, still complaining of her back.

"But it will be better soon. My grandfather is going to say a *karakia* (chant) for me. And my mother rubbed the silver threepence over me. When my grandfather says the

karakia the pain will go. Then he will throw the threepence into the river and get rid of the *tapu* (taboo)."

"When is he going to say the *karakia,* Tatai?"

"Tonight or tomorrow. I will know when I get better."

At precisely eight o'clock, Tatai straightened up and stretched herself.

"I'm better now," she said. "My grandfather has said that *karakia.*"

How can a psychologist view such a story? Tatai could read and speak English well. She had reached high school standard in her education. Yet her illness was obviously not organic in origin.

Further questioning showed that she had recently slept in a house where her brother had died two years before.

"The house belongs to Christians," she explained, "so the *tapu* on it has not been lifted. I had forgotten this. In our Maori belief, a house has to be cleansed after a death occurs in it."

"How is that done, Tatai?"

"By prayers. By *karakias.* The *tohungas* (priests) say them."

"But there are no real *tohungas* in New Zealand now, Tatai. The old Maori schools of learning are finished."

"Some of their knowledge and their healing power still remains with certain of the old people. Like my grandfather, for instance."

"So he acts as *tohunga* in raising the *tapu?*"

"Yes. He knows some of the chants."

Obviously, Tatai's story was dependent on her cultural environment. Maori belief is that the place where anyone has died is automatically unclean and this *tapu* has to be lifted by an appropriate ceremony. This had not been done so Tatai, becoming aware of this, punished herself for breaking this *tapu* by assuming a backache that was very real to her.

This illness would not be cured by medicines or hospitalization. It needed an appropriate ceremony—that performed by Tamarau. This belief in *tapu* is the inheritance of a people still in a transitory culture. Such an illness is not a paranormal experience. We would call it the manifestation of a guilt complex. This is recognized by these people, too, and such illness is called "Maori sickness." This is to differentiate it from true physical illness.

The actual symbolism experienced in both pseudo-psychical and psychical illnesses or experiences differ according to the culture. Freud did not fully appreciate this. Nevertheless, his principles still hold good and interpretations of such phenomena along Freudian lines are interesting.

For instance, Tamarau considers it unlucky to dream of eels. Eels amount to his family god. When he sees them, either in reality or in dreams, he knows he is being warned of something.

During the winter of 1956 he had pleurisy. Because of his age his family was very concerned and anticipated his death. However, Tamarau dreamed of meeting two eels in a river. One of them he killed. The second eel spoke to him. It begged for its life. This Tamarau granted. Then, on looking across the river, he saw two very dear friends who had died. Then he knew that the dead eel represented his two departed friends.

On waking, he interpreted his dream to mean that if he had crossed the river he would have died and joined his two friends. As he had not, he would live a little longer.

Psychologically, we can consider that this belief would help lead to a state of mind in which the improvement and eventual cure of his condition was at an optimum.

However, *tohungas* are not only concerned with such pseudo-psychical experiences. They are also frequently concerned with the truly paranormal.

Strictly, the term *tohunga* means a specialist. Formerly, there were different classes of these specialists—canoe-makers, tattooing artists, seers and others. *Tohungas* of the highest order were the conservers of tribal lore. They taught this lore orally to succeeding generations. *Tohungas* of this class no longer exist. Nor do any of the traditional schools of learning. We know of the historians, record-keepers and astrologers of the Maoris only from Europeans who wrote of them fifty to one hundred years ago.

Yet one form of *tohungaism* does still exist. One of the duties of the old people practicing as *tohungas* has already been described. Another aspect deals with the truly paranormal. My husband and I have collected many stories of spontaneous extrasensory experiences amongst the Maori folk. In fact, every person asked about this in the Urewera country had either an experience of his own to relate to us or was involved in one.

Such a story is the one Waaka told us.

As a young man he had slept in a disused Maori fort. During the night he felt someone get into bed with him. Turning over, he saw it was his brother whom he had believed to be in a village a hundred miles away. Thinking the brother had come to visit him he went off to sleep again. In the morning, his brother was not there. He asked several companions if they had seen him. Each denied having seen his brother come in during the night. This disturbed Waaka, because he was convinced he had seen his brother.

Later, he went off as usual to work on the farm of a white man. During the morning the manager came down and told him a telegram had arrived announcing his brother's death. This had occurred in his home town about one hundred miles away, during the night.

Now what sort of interpretation can we give this story? Most likely Waaka became aware of his brother's death telepathically. Such a story follows a well known pattern of telepathic experience, and we may consider it an individual case where information has ostensibly been gained through extrasensory means. (Most outstanding stories of an apparent telephathic experience deal with the death of some loved relative and so are called "crisis cases.")

However, it seems that the information is obtained at a subconscious level. The belief that Waaka's brother had visited Waaka during the night was merely a way of bringing this information to his consciousness.

In the old days, a Maori *tohunga* would have been consulted to interpret such a dream. Possibly, a correct interpretation would have been given before sensory communication made it apparent. Undoubtedly correct interpretation of such dreams or experiences was one of the concerns of *tohungas* and still is.

Most Maoris of the Urewera country have had such an experience and past experiences of this sort have led to a firm belief in extrasensory perception. As Europeanization proceeds, this belief is lessening. On the other hand, the frequency of such experiences is not necessarily disappearing. But while the psychological mechanism resorts to symbolism as a means of bringing these perceptions to the conscious, they will continue to be misunderstood on occasion. Thus, the symbolism in dreams is of interest, not only to the person experiencing the dream but to the psychologist as well.

When considering such psychical and pseudo-psychical experiences, we must not believe them unique to any special culture. Man expresses himself in a diversified manner. His manner of gaining information is also diversified. And while such experiences are part of man as a whole, they are colored by his individual cultural environment. This is appropriate.

By appreciating this, we are nearer to understanding the differences that go to make up societies. We are also nearer to understanding the psychological complexities of man in general.

The golden thread of magic links the islands, from the untouched jungles of Sumatra to the tropic charm of Bali.

INDONESIA'S MYSTIC WORLD

Margueritte Harmon Bro

Any acute observer of the cultural scene in America, not to say the situation in regard to religion, knows that the public attitude toward psychic phenomena has changed in the last quarter century. Indeed, within the last decade. In particular, the group commonly called the upper middle class has become more open-minded. There was a time when ignorant people visited fortune tellers and astrologers and a few interested scholars set up experiments with mediums, but mill-run educated persons —the rank and file of church members—steered clear of such goings-on. Now, this general attitude of skepticism was, in a sense, hard on psychic phenomena, for there seems small doubt but that extrasensory powers find it more difficult to demonstrate in the face of acute skepticism. It appears less true that gullible people imagine results than that open minds make results possible.

During my residence for a year and a half in Indonesia, I was constantly impressed by the difference there in intellectual climate regarding psychic phenomena. To be sure, some highly placed Indonesians pooh-pooh reported psychic experiences, declaring that their mother imagined or their grandfather used to believe, etcetera. But after the dinner party is over, when approached sincerely, they tell what they have seen and experienced. There it is; make such explanation as one wishes.

Among the common people such initial resistance is largely lacking. Some servants who have long worked for

white masters apologize for their own reports, even while relating experiences they cannot keep to themselves. But most of the country people take for granted that mankind lives in an extended world in which the spirits of the departed, poltergeists, evil and benign forces of many sorts, manifest their presence. On the whole, this extended universe is friendly; or, rather, as in the seen world, good people draw helpful spirits around them. There is a hobnobbery of the like-minded. I was impressed by the way in which ordinary persons expect honorable action to merit honorable help, and they know what honorable means.

Take the matter of the kris. An Indonesian gentleman in traditional dress is, indeed, a dignified figure—sarong (which is an ungathered skirt or piece of tubing, folded at the waist and rolled tightly into a belt), tight-sleeved jacket (often of striped cotton), shoes or sandals, and, for most occasions, the small Moslem hat (in Indonesia usually of black velvet); then the kris or short sword, thrust through the belt or knot of the sarong, worn slantwise over one hip.

The hilt of a good kris is made of fine wood, ivory or gold, encrusted with precious stones; sometimes a small fortune in emeralds, rubies, rose diamonds, star sapphires. It may be fashioned in the shape of an animal's head, a bird, a demon, a beetle, sometimes with totem or tribal significance. Sometimes the design is geometric or a flower pattern, again often with heraldic significance. Hilt and sheath are not sacred and may be pawned, or a son may further embellish an inherited kris. The treasured portion is the blade, made of finely tempered steel, exceedingly sharp, often undulating or flame shaped.

Usually a family owns several krises but one of them is credited with being the repository of the ancestors' strength. An inherited kris is believed to have a character of its own, compounded of the traits of the former owners intensified by the guardianship of their spirits. It is kept in a place of honor, sometimes enshrined with fresh flowers placed respectfully before it, and it should be han-

dled only by one whose intent is pure because its spirit may react against an unscrupulous hand.

This purity of intent is an important point. I heard first-hand tales of intruders or enemies who grabbed a powerful kris from the hand of a dying victim, only to stumble and be killed by the kris. "What did he expect? The hand of my grandfather was still upon that kris." Sometimes authentic witnesses report that a purloined kris "fell" from a shelf or wall in such strange fashion as to cut a vein in the temple of an unrightful owner passing by. Sometimes the kris, wrongly come by, is seen by several witnesses to come sailing through the air, apparently hurled by an invisible hand, in th dead of night, especially at full moon. (Naturally, these are subjective reports which might be categorized as "group hallucinations.")

On the other hand, the power of a good kris is said to be enormous. A close friend of mine told me about her father's kris. She is a thoroughly Westernized woman, educated abroad; herself, a leading educator. Her father is a distinguished physician. During the Japanese occupation he was once taken into custody. With several other men of independent spirit he was marched off toward prison, often a point of no return, each man pushed along by a Japanese guard who prodded with his gun.

But the physician had managed to get his ancestral kris under his coat and every time the soldier approached too close he as promptly fell back again, repulsed by the power of the sword. The soldier was greatly upset, so another took his place but he, too, was unable to approach the physician. Finally, the guards were aware that some power emanated from this man and he was dismissed. Not a member of the family was surprised; they were sure when he put on his kris that no harm would come to him. This kind of report is common. Some power, whether inherent, delegated or imputed, works for protection, as well as for tremendous assurance and courage in the owner of a distinguished kris.

The best example of extrasensory power trained for practical use is probably walled within the ancestral village of the Djajadiningrat family, a family which has furnished many statesmen and educators. We knew some members of the clan; that is, members who are in public circulation. The pure core of the clan remains within the ancestral walls. Some three centuries ago an ancestor of those Djajadiningrats who are in public life left his home village. He was next in succession for the job of clan-head, a distinction which would confine him within his own home for the rest of his days. Evidently the confines of the village he could accept but not the closer quarters which must be his if he were to assume the duties of both priest and prince, roughly speaking, and carry the responsibility for the welfare of the entire group. So he left the village, as was his privilege, but one who leaves cannot return. He entered the service of the rajah of his district as a stable boy. And as happens as often in life as in story, his exceptional endowments brought him to the top; he married the princess and started a distinguished line. It was one of his direct descendants who first told me about the home village.

At the time of the Moslem conquest, this group of people—Hindu-Buddhist-animist by culture and tradition—refused to take on the new religion and guarded against infiltration of foreign ideas by becoming a strict autocracy with their own laws and customs. From that time, there was no marriage outside the clan, but because this is a virile and balanced stock the result has not been degeneracy but strength. After the death of a mate, an individual does not remarry.

The group is not literate; none of them can read or write and counting is done with bundles of five small sticks. They produce everything necessary for their own sustenance, except salt which they buy on the open market, always giving three times the value in exchange produce so that they will not be tempted to profit from trade. One member of the outer family explained to me that cupidity dulls spiritual perception.

All the absent members, although they have left by choice, are still considered a part of the clan and the elders of the village keep track of every one of them by watching forty stone jars of water and forty trees planted

beside the jars, each of the forty representing some division of the clan. The elders know when an absent member is ill or in need of counsel. This is simply a statement of fact which the distinguished outsiders will substantiate with plenty of documentation. If someone in an out-family is seriously ill, an older member of the in-family is sure to appear with a beneficial herb or with healing in his hands. If an outside-member is about to leave for foreign duty or is undertaking a large financial venture or accepting governmental responsibility, an elder arrives with pertinent advice. There is never any communication by letter (obviously) nor by courier. No such means is needed.

Dutch government officials and scientists long wanted to observe and record the life of the in-group but were forced by public opinion to respect its self-imposed privacy. Finally, before the last World War, a Dutch commissioner entered the enclosure, laughing off all warnings. He was in no way molested; he received neither help nor hindrance; the silence he met at every turn was neither friendly nor unfriendly. He turned in his report—and died very quietly two weeks later in his bath. During the occupation certain Japanese officials insisted upon checking taxable property within the walls—and I am told that each man also died a short time thereafter, also peacefully. I had a great desire to go to that village, not for purposes of making a report but to see what could be learned about clairvoyance, precognition and spiritual healing.

In many places power is ascribed to certain springs, streams or trees. For instance, one of our good friends, a beautiful Chinese woman whose husband is Dutch, had a fruit tree in her yard close beside the high garden wall. Boys made a habit of climbing the wall to swipe the fruit before it was ripe. Some years ago she decided there was no way to save the fruit but she might keep the youngsters from constantly climbing the tree and often sliding down into her garden. So she invited in all the neighborhood youngsters and promised them that all the fruit on the tree should be saved for them, but that they must pick

it on one certain day designated by her. They happily agreed and kept the promise.

But one year, just before the fruit was ripe, a ten-year-old son of a neighbor climbed the tree and took some fruit. He fell, seemingly without being hurt, and went home. The owner of the tree knew nothing about the incident until a late hour that night when the boy's father came to beg permission to bring the boy into the garden to die. The father said that the boy insisted upon returning, saying that the spirit of the tree had taken his spirit. So he was laid under the tree and there he died. Since then all the people of the neighborhood have had great respect for a tree so righteous that it demands righteousness of all who approach it. When passing under its branches they stop to make obeisance and not infrequently someone is thrown into a trance or falls into convulsions under the tree.

The old gardener in the home of our Chinese friend has communication with the spirit of the tree in his dreams. "The tree must have a small offering today," he will tell his mistress, whereupon a fine dish is prepared for it. Whenever the family has a feast, dabs of the best food go to the spirit of the tree, *via* the gardener. But he, himself, scrupulously refuses to taste these offerings. During the Japanese occupation and the even more turbulent time of the revolution, that house and all who at various times lived in it were treated with respect; the neighbors saw to that. There were murders in the houses on both sides but no marauder so much as entered the garden of the tree.

For a time after the arrival of the British Occupation Forces a British author lived in the house. The gardener explained the power of the tree to him and thereafter, whenever a box of rations arrived from abroad, the box was opened in the gardener's presence so that he might choose some small portion—never much and never the best—for the tree. To this day the sophisticated owners of the house allow the gardener his way with the tree and thereby merit the respect of their whole neighborhood.

And so these incidents portraying the friendly intercourse of nature with her children, the rapport of the seen

and the unseen, could go on and on. The trance in which some of the most beautiful dancing is performed, as well as some which is grotesque, is said by the participant to be an imparting of energy from supernatural beings to whose tutelage the dancer is pledged.

The little *legong* dancers, for instance, who charmed New York audiences in recent visits, are devotees of the goddess Dewa Pergina and in their home village of Pliatan in Bali they always go to the temple in the afternoon before they dance, making their small offerings of flowers. Moreover, they observe certain taboos which enhance pure conduct; they eat no beef, never walk beneath clothes on a line (which is a test for thieves), never sit in front of open doors (through which evil spirits might be passing), never use rough language nor even listen to rough language. They bathe only in clear spring water, never in the irrigation water of the paddy ditches.

These young dancers—two of them eleven years old and the most skillful only nine—dance for more than half an hour, their bodies attaining the acme of bodily intensity. The two legongs dance together, looking-glass fashion, one moving to the left as the other moves to the right, all their movements, gestures, even the flick of their eyelashes synchronized, eternal duality in complete harmony. It is a synchronization which can scarcely be achieved under direction of the conscious mind.

The attendant, in particular, in her part as the black crow, dances almost independently of gravity, hopping and flying at the warrior with a fury which makes the shivers go up the spine of the onlooker. She simply dances what cannot be danced. Then at a signal from the drummer she walks calmly offstage, perfectly at peace, without any facial expression, and with no indication of breathlessness or rise in pulse. This I know, for I have talked with the child less than one minute after her dance was finished. Perhaps a self-induced trance? More than likely. But an energy beyond anything the body can sustain in its usual waking state.

The trances of the *barong* dancers are another kind of thing. The barong dance is not performed at a whim but

usually rises from some need of the community to exorcise evil spirits which have in some way molested the village. A story involving the greatest of witches, Rangda, and the fabulous animal, the *barong,* moves to its climax in a wild dance performed by twelve to twenty men in which they draw their krises, stabbing themselves and going through frantic contortions. The beast is a huge thing some fifteen feet in length, with four men inside its furry coat providing manipulation for the legs and the enormous head. Frequently the trance part of the dance with the stabbing is simulated for tourists, but a dance performed for a genuine occasion is another thing and even an outsider knows the difference.

Once I was in Bali when the barong's coat was stolen in a certain village, a loss which amounted to a considerable sum as much gold leaf is used in its embellishment. In the olden days the stealing of a barong's coat merited the death penalty and while in these days government officials will have none of that, still the authorities in Den Pasar were much concerned for what would "happen" to the thief if he were caught by the village. I had the feeling that the authorities were not quite certain who or what motivated those barong dancers at the height of their fury.

And so through the whole of the ancient culture, the warp of tradition over which the woof of modern adaptation is woven, there runs this gold thread of mysticism. Gods and men are not far apart; the veil between two domains is thin, indeed, and no one seems surprised if it be pierced at times while knowing eyes look through to the other side. Now it may be a daring conclusion but it seemed to me that some of the courage and zest with which Indonesians are attacking their seemingly insurmountable problems rises from this deep belief that power from Beyond is immediately available. The psychic climate may have as much to do with the nation's achievement as does its physical climate and the influence of topography, seasons and monsoons.

Australian aborigines havè neither telephone nor radio, but communicate with friends who are miles away.

ABORIGINES ARE PSYCHIC

Albert Abarbanel

Scientists have investigated the remarkable "psychic" powers displayed by primitive peoples in various parts of the world, and have come up with impressive evidence that such phenomena as telepathy, clairvoyance and psychometry are not unconfirmed rumor, but are everyday facts. It is true, for example, that savage bushmen in Australia, using no other agency than their minds, can accurately transmit thoughts, feelings and ideas to friends and relatives one hundred miles away. They have reconstructed crimes, identified and tracked down criminals, and located strayed cattle and lost valuables.

The Australian aborigines are one of the most primitive peoples. They live deep in the bush under conditions like those of the Stone Age. Centuries of struggle for existence appear to have sharpened their faculties; their eyes can identify small objects at great distances, even in fog; their ears accurately interpret sounds inaudible to civilized man; their noses distinguish between small animals and human beings they cannot see or hear.

Native trackers employed by the Queensland Police display uncanny deductive powers. From the trail alone they can tell if their quarry is fresh or tired, drunk or frightened, carrying a load or unencumbered. If the load is carried by hand, they can tell which hand carries it. Often they give police a minute description of the unknown fugitive's physical appearance and peculiarities. One tracker correctly deduced that the man he was chasing

was knock-kneed; another knew that the fugitive had struck his great toe on a rock and therefore was lame. Concentrating intently on the trail, the native tracker seldom speaks. He is oblivious of everything but his immediate object.

The psychic powers of these people startled Dr. A. P. Elkin, an anthropologist of Sydney University. In each village the natives seemed to know far in advance that his research party was approaching. They knew where he had been previously and what his mission was. Yet investigation proved that his coming had not been announced by messenger, smoke signals, drums or other physical agency. His hosts explained: "Thoughts, though invisible, can be sent flying through the air."

Dr. Elkin cites scores of instances in *Aboriginal Men of High Degree* of natives receiving telepathic messages from distant homes informing them that a father had died, a wife had given birth, a sister had been killed, etc. Checking the information, he discovered that in each case it was accurate. While there is no accepted scientific explanation for this phenomenon, he says, there can be no doubt that it exists.

Controlled extrasensory perception tests among the aborigines of northern New South Wales have yielded amazing results. They were conducted under the auspices of Sydney University by psychologist Lyndon Rose, following the pattern devised by Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University.

In one of the tests five dice, each of a different color, were used. A native tossed the dice from a box one at a time and concentrated on the color exposed. In a hut out of sight sat another native under constant supervision. He tried to guess the colors in the order they turned up. An average of twenty percent correct guesses is par for the course. Australian bushmen consistently averaged better than fifty percent correct!

In another experiment a cigarette was put into a tightly sealed box. Three aborigines brought in from the bush ten miles away were separately shown the box and asked

to identify the contents. One said it was a cigarette; the other two identified it as "tobacco and paper."

To make the test more difficult, a cigarette holder was sealed in the box. Ten natives selected at random were admitted separately, shown the box, and challenged to guess its contents. None of them had ever seen a cigarette holder, or even heard of it. Yet nine precisely described the shape, length, and color of the unknown object! Let me add that when this same experiment was performed at Duke University, only one in ten students guessed correctly.

Conceding that ideas might be transmitted telepathically without deliberate effort on the part of the agent, could these natives guess correctly when the answer was unknown to the examiner? To find out, exhaustive experiments were conducted with a deck of twenty-five plain-backed cards, designed by Dr. Rhine for experiments at Duke University. On the face of five cards are marked circles, five with squares, five with stars, five with wavy lines and the remaining five with crosses. The deck is shuffled and the cards dealt out one at a time, face down. The object of the game is to guess the symbols in correct sequence. Five correct guesses in twenty-five tries is average success.

Since the native dialect did not have words for these symbols, analogous descriptions had to be devised. Squares became *bumai* ("first area"), circles become "holes," etc. Thus, unfamiliarity imposed an additional handicap on natives who took the test.

Again results were astonishing. In 7,400 recorded guesses, twenty-three aborigines were correct 527 times above mathematical expectation. A native diviner named Lizzie Williams made 1,700 guesses. Steadily complaining that the symbols confused her, she chalked up 789 correct answers—499 more than normal.

These results were startling. If chance alone were responsible, such a score could occur only once in millions of trials. The extrasensory perception of these natives, thus, is unusual and invites investigation of other psychic gifts.

Spectacular powers of super-normal cognition are displayed by many African witch doctors and diviners. According to Dr. A. C. Hardy of Oxford University, President of the Zoology Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science: "No one who has examined the evidence for telepathy among these primitive people with an unbiased mind can reasonably reject it without intellectual dishonesty."

Among the Poros in the interior, the use of a divining rod is common. In one instance police, baffled by a series of plantation robberies, called in a local witch doctor. Some two hundred suspects were lined up in a clearing —houseboys, bush cutters, nearby villagers. The witch doctor and his assistant appeared, the latter carrying a large leather whip.

As they walked down the line inspecting man after man, the whip dangled limply. Suddenly the thongs began to writhe like a snake. As though possessed of a will of its own, the whip lashed out furiously at the head and body of a middle-aged villager. Howling with pain, he immediately confessed.

Such phenomena may be ascribed to "motor-automatism"—reflex muscular action stimulated by subconscious suggestion. The same principle accounts for the success of dowsers in finding water.

"Psychometry" is the name given by parapsychologists to super-normal knowledge of past events derived from objects intimately associated with individuals involved. Captain F. W. Butt-Thompson records in his book *West African Secret Societies* an amazing exhibition of such powers in his presence by a native diviner in Dahomey.

Returning from a long hunt, a chief called on his witch doctor to tell him which (if any) of his twenty wives had been unfaithful during his absence. The diviner collected the toothsticks of the women, touched each in turn to his cheek. Finally he held one up. Its owner immediately confessed to infidelity with the chief's nephew. According to the investigator, the witch doctor could not have had independent knowledge of the adultery; he had just returned to the village with the hunting expedition.

In the interior of Ethiopia congenital dwarfs known as Labasha are trained from childhood in the exercise of psychic powers. These are enhanced by imbibing a secret potion which puts them in a trance. Under the influence of the drug they become clairvoyant, reenacting with amazing accuracy recent crimes and other events.

Here is an eyewitness account of the detection of a native who killed and robbed the elder of a tribe in the province of Harrar:

"The Labasha, dancing and gesticulating, led the procession to the house where the crime had been committed. He fell to the ground, covering his eyes with one hand in tense concentration. Suddenly he leaped to his feet, made his way stealthily to the door, crept inside.

"A few minutes later he emerged, back bent and arms raised as if carrying a heavy sack on his shoulders. Walking with a pronounced limp, he proceeded some distance from the house, put the imaginary sack down, drew an imaginary object from his belt and threw it into a nearby bush. A priest following on his heels bent over and inspected the bush. Reaching in, he held up to view a knife, stained with blood.

"Then the dwarf turned and limped down the road toward a small hut half way down the hill. As he approached it a native shot out of the door and made for the jungle. His movements were quick and jerky—he limped. Just as he reached the trees the dwarf caught up with him, leaped on his back and wrestled him to the ground.

"The criminal had been captured by a native seer who combined the talents of a medium, a bloodhound and an actor."

The various methods of clairvoyance and divination of the Kaffir of South Africa have been investigated and confirmed by numerous authorities.

Despite restrictions and a decline in the number of recognized native witch doctors, there are still quite a few of them whose psychic powers are remarkable. These Kaffir "doctors" are not chosen at random. The tribal chiefs must be convinced of their psychic gifts before they are

permitted to develop them. Only when the training diviner is satisfied with his apprentice's susceptibility to psychic influence, will he be initiated into the secrets and customs known only to witch doctors.

Among primitive Mixtecan Indians living in southern Mexico the local shaman ("wise one") displays remarkable powers of clairvoyance after partaking of "sacred" mushrooms. In recent years, a scientific expedition to Mexico confirmed the hallucinogenic properties of seven types of mushrooms. Members of the expedition were R. Gordon Wasson, a New York banker; his wife Dr. Valentina P. Wasson, a well-known pediatrician; Professor Roger Heim, one of the world's leading mycologists; and Guy Stresser-Pean, French anthropologist.

They discovered that the shaman, after chewing mushrooms, frequently reported on the welfare of distant villagers. The Wassons themselves received a description of the activities and state of mind of their son, Peter, thousands of miles away in the United States. Although it sounded fantastic at the time, upon their return to this country the Wassons were able to confirm this clairvoyant report in every detail.

Some parapsychologists believe that such super-sensory powers were commonly possessed and utilized by early man, but were lost in the process of evolution. Psychic faculties may still be latent in the civilized human brain. By training and exercise, can they be resurrected to enhance the skills and techniques of modern science?

Scientists are seeking the answer to that question in the Australian, African, and Mexican bush.

A firsthand report on mysterious methods of diagnosis and healing in a Caribbean island community.

HEALING IN JAMAICA

Edward Seaga

For nineteen months of 1953 and 1954, I lived in a small Jamaican village and in Kingston, Jamaica's capital city, in order to make an anthropological study of religious cults. A natural part of this survey was the collection of material on unorthodox healing as practiced on the island.

In the village where I spent eight months, there was an active "healing yard." In Kingston, where a greater number of healers are concentrated than in any other part of the island, I had an opportunity to see healing at work in an urban setting.

As I progressed with my study, I found myself concerned primarily with methodology in healing: that is, diagnosis, or "reading" as it is called; and therapy, which is usually called "deliverance." In addition, I collected information on the types of disorders which most frequently confront the unorthodox healer; the extent of the healing practice in Jamaica, and social factors which have influenced its development. In this article, I will touch on all these aspects of unorthodox healing.

The unorthodox healer in Jamaica is a spiritual healer. He consults with the spirit world in diagnosing and treating disorders. There are three types of spirits in this supernatural world: human dead, Christian divinities, and Satanic powers. Some cults deal exclusively with the first group, but others in which there is an Afro-Christian

blending also include spirits of the latter two in their pantheon.

The use of spirits is not imperative; it can be avoided by practicing certain methods of diagnosis and therapy outlined in the de Laurence publications, such as the *Great Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and Indian Occultism.* These practices are known locally as "science." It is not the purpose of this article to discuss such methods, for they are well publicized.

The healer usually receives the gift of healing from his patron spirit. In return, he must feed this spirit regularly with rum, wine, rice, sugar and water, bread and fruits. He must also provide flowers, candlelight, and perfumes, and offer a blood sacrifice at specified times, but at least once yearly. In addition, the spirit must be paid with a silver coin for its participation in major rituals. This contract does not exclude the healer from communicating with other spirits. It merely means that in return for the favors mentioned, that particular spirit has agreed to visit or reside with the healer, or be regularly accessible for consultation.

The novitiate healer is largely submissive to the demands of the spirit for favors, and observes certain taboos in dress, and other customs of daily life. With a little experience, however, he learns first to bargain with the spirits, and later to subjugate and discipline them, although they are never completely submissive.

Unorthodox healing involves both diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. The following description of a healing session which I witnessed will serve to illustrate a typical method of diagnostic procedure, and one form of treatment.

In Brother Man's healing mission, or "balmyard," as it is called, a visitor was seated by a table on which were a Bible, a Sankey hymnal, a notebook, a white candle, a vase of flowers, a box for money, a padlock, and a pair of scissors. The last two are for "locking" and "cutting" spirits respectively. Brother Man had wrapped his head with lengthy strips of red, green, and yellow cloth. Into

this wrap he had stuck two pencils, signifying his ability to receive messages.

The healer placed his hand on the shoulder of the visitor while humming a hymn, "To Thee I Make My Sorrows Known." The visitor, or patient, joined in the humming. Then each began to tap rhythmically with his right foot. Brother Man's voice soon revealed a deeper emotional content and he broke into short improvised but melodic airs, his voice making a sound like that of a horn. This sound is known as "blowing," and was his invocation to the spirits. He slowly circled the visitor, pausing twice to raise his hands while his body stiffened; for a few steps, he stumbled, off balance. Occasionally he stood at one spot beating his foot to the accompaniment of the invocation, while his head swayed gently to the rhythm. His eyes were closed and he appeared to be in deep concentration. His features were contorted in a manner that suggested much strain.

Presently, he ceased "blowing" and stood before the visitor who had been gazing downward solemnly and tapping with his feet. To the rhythm of the beats, the healer uttered the message he was receiving while his hands roamed slowly and gently over the man's body: "Angels . . . morning . . . prophets . . . judgment . . . deliverance . . . 32,69,90 . . . destruction . . . peace . . . message . . . house to house . . . red to red . . . *tarry bandoona* . . . *hicandoola* . . . sign . . . head . . . message . . . spirit . . . *hoocanday* . . . mother . . . Jonas . . . sign."

The italicized words are in "language," that is "nonsense syllables." These words are considered direct revelations from the spirits.

The healer's hands roamed gently over the man's body but concentrated on the head, which he massaged soothingly. He appeared to be only partly conscious of what he was doing even when he stopped occasionally to scribble sign characters on a sheet of paper called the "healing sheet." Finally, he pressed this sheet on the visitor's forehead and, indicating that it should be held there, he sat down to give his "reading": a spirit had interfered with

the man, causing pains and "confusion" in the head. The spirit had not been "set on him" by anyone.

To "cut" this spirit, the healer prescribed that the "healing sheet" be pressed to his visitor's forehead whenever the pain was present. Next, he dug a hole in the ground and partly filled it with water. When the water had settled, he gave the visitor some to drink and laved his head with more. Finally, he opened and closed the scissors violently over the man's head. The visitor then deposited in the box on the table five shillings and a silver threepenny—this latter for payment to the spirit.

I later interviewed this man privately and learned that, as is the custom, he had told the healer nothing concerning the nature of his complaint, but merely requested a "reading." He had visited Brother Man because of pains in his head, accompanied by a strong desire to hurt and rebuke himself. Three previous visits to physicians had failed to give relief, and further, their diagnosis of "nerves" did not satisfy him. He was satisfied with the healer's diagnosis and treatment, and experienced some immediate relief. On his third visit, six days later, he felt full relief.

Brother Man's ministrations, as described here, illustrate only one method of diagnosis in unorthodox healing, as well as a particular type of therapy.

Diagnostic methods are based on the assumption that both material and non-material worlds are capable of relaying messages from the spirit world. Fruits, flowers, the sun or moon, stars, water, candles, clothing, stones, sign characters, rhythmic beats of the drum or feet, songs, animals, and plants, are some of the media which transmit messages.

Fundamentally, there are two methods of "reading." Firstly, the message can be "rationally" deduced. "Card-cutting" is the most popular of the so-called rational methods. A card is chosen to suit the physical characteristics of the client; for example, a Jack of Diamonds would represent a young white man with thin features. The pack is dealt out in rows of nine, and those above the Jack are his "danger" cards, for they can "trample"

him. On the other hand, he has power over whatever is represented by the cards below the chosen card.

There are other methods of card-cutting, just as there are other media by which "deduction" is possible; for example, through the interpretation of dreams. Here, certain symbols such as fish, money, and the color green represent "prosperity." But black animals, such as pigs and crows; creatures who prey at night, such as owls, and articles customarily used in black magic, such as the pumpkin, all carry "destruction messages."

Rational interpretation, however, is far less popular than the alternative method which is best described as non-rational, since it can involve either intuitive or paranormal cognition, or, more frequently, both.

A typical example here is the "reading" of a leaf. In this operation, the polka-dot, multicolored leaf of the "Jeremiah" Croton (*Codiaevum-variegatum*), is most popular. The reader concentrates his vision on these spots until they first become blurred and then separate into real and virtual components. The virtual component is believed to have been separated from the real by the spirit, and during the process of this separation the message it carries is instantaneously impressed upon the reader.

This same method can be used for "reading" the flame of a candle, a glass of water (with a coin in it and a light nearby for reflection), the sun, moon, stars, or sign characters.

Visual concentration is not the only form of non-rational cognition practiced. In the case described earlier, the healer received his impressions non-visually through songs, the rhythm of foot beats, laying on of hands, and general concentration. (The more sophisticated healers volunteer the information that concentration, visual or otherwise, is the most essential element in "reading.") Further, some healers do not require any specific sensory stimulus, visual, auditory, or otherwise.

In the village in which I lived, a woman whom I had found to be an excellent and very reliable informant told me her experience with such a healer. This woman believes in the existence and the power of spirits, but is

quite distrustful of healers. On the sudden death of her much beloved little daughter, however, she was persuaded by a relative to visit a reader in a distant village, after both had agreed that the medical diagnosis of "typhoid" did not account for the child's strange behavior prior to death. The reader asked her visitor no questions but merely acknowledged her presence with the invitation, "Sit, daughter." After a prolonged silence, the reader, who did not seem to be preoccupied in any specific manner, began to draw in a notebook before her.

When the sketch had been completed, the village woman told me, she was amazed to see that the roadway to her home from the main road had been sketched, with buildings such as shops, churches, etc., accurately located. The woman's home was also depicted, and in the front yard the reader had sketched a banana tree at a spot where one actually was located. The reader instructed my friend to keep her other children away from this tree, for the spirit which killed her daughter resided there. The reader explained further that the malevolent spirit had been set there by a neighbor as a result of a quarrel.

This woman kept her discovery confidential as she was afraid that the news of her visit might reach her church brethren who would ostracize her, since they disapproved of such practices. Years later, she discovered that her husband had secretly visited a "card-cutter" elsewhere and had been given precisely the same information about the banana tree and the neighbor.

In practice, one rarely finds diagnostic methods restricted entirely to the rational or non-rational categories in a particular "reading," for even in such methods as gazing in the sun or the flame of a candle until it becomes red and separates into two images, the virtual image often takes the form of an animal, or some other non-abstract object from which the reader can "rationally" deduce his information. Such diagnostic methods will emphasize non-rational cognition, supplemented by deduction.

Before discussing the question of therapy in unorthodox healing, it would be best to consider the various cate-

gories of complaints which are usually brought to the healer. For convenience, the disorders are classified in two groups: psycho-physiological and social. The first category refers to illness of a psychological and/or physiological nature; it is not intended only to mean psychosomatic, although such disorders are included. The second group includes such problems as how to attract or keep a lover, obtain a job, increase prosperity in business, and so on. Such problems are as frequent as those of the psycho-physiological group, but they will not be discussed in this article since the word "healing" is used here in its more usual sense: correction of a psychological or physiological disorder.

The most common psycho-physiological disorders with which a healer deals are the following: paralysis; septic ulcers; sterility; venereal disease; excessive vomiting (hyperemesis); lack of appetite (anorexia); distended abdomen; obstipation; influenza; headaches; colds; body aches; high or low blood pressure; extended pregnancy; tuberculosis; blindness; deafness; epilepsy; neuroses, especially hysteria and kleptomania; and various forms of psychosis.

Each of these disorders can result from purely psychological or physiological causes—or from the influence of malevolent spirits.

Prescribed treatment for psycho-physiological disorders usually includes teas made from the root, leaves, or fruits of indigenous plants; laxatives; patent medicines.

A woman of the village in which I lived told me of her own case, which illustrates the treatment of a purely physiological disorder. She was critically ill with typhoid and eventually the attending physician conceded the case. At this point a blind neighbor, who was a sometime healer, volunteered her help. She requested a clean towel and a basin of cold water with which she sponged the dying woman vigorously. Meanwhile, relatives and friends who had gathered to prepare for the burial sang and prayed fervently. The semi-conscious woman was then raised from her bed and persuaded to walk from her room to the gathering outside without assistance. My informant

recalls a strong sensation of increased consciousness running through her at that time. The healer requested a cup of warm tea made from the leaves of physic nut (*Jatropha curcas*), Spanish needle (*Bidens pilosa*) and fever grass (*Wilfrid*), without sugar or salt. After drinking this, she felt a renewed strength and was able to stand among the amazed gathering for many minutes. In the days that followed, she improved rapidly. In fifteen days, she considered herself fully recovered.

Hysterics and psychotics are usually treated with shock, rather than internal medication. The most popular forms of shock treatment are partial asphyxiation with smoke, sudden immersion in cold water, and fervent prayer.

When spirit interference is diagnosed in any disorder, the prescribed therapy must fulfill one of three functions: eject, catch, or propitiate the malevolent spirit.

Spirits favor rum, wine, milk, cakes, bread, fruits, carbonated beverages, sacrificial blood, sugar-and-water, perfumes, and flowers; on the other hand, blue candles, lime, salt, cutting instruments, guns, and whips, can be used to repel them. Pharmaceutical liquids and powders are also widely used to attract or repel spirits; these often have names which suggest their specific usage: for example, oil of love, compellance powder, deliverance oil, and attraction powder. Others have such exotic names as Blood of Jesus, and Seven Kings Oil.

The most important rituals in which these various materials are used are called "tables" and "baths."

In the former, the materials selected to catch, expel, or propitiate the spirit are spread on a table and the ritual proceeds with singing, dancing, feasting, and spirit-possession for one or many more days.

In "baths," the ingredients are added to water which is then used to sponge the individual thoroughly. Any item from the previous list of materials can be used, providing it is water-soluble. In a "blood bath," which is considered the most powerful, a pigeon is usually torn in half over the client's head.

"Tables" are used exclusively for the treatment of cases where spirit-interference is diagnosed; "baths" are

sometimes prescribed for purely psycho-physiological disorders, although internal medication or the laying on of hands are the most accepted forms of therapy here. Internal medication is not widely prescribed for cases of spirit-interference since, with few exceptions, the pharmaceutical compounds, which are usually required here, are generally considered unsafe for internal use.

The novitiate in healing usually relies on the spirit to dictate the mode of treatment as well as the ingredients for the prescription in all cases, whether spirit-interference is diagnosed or not. Repeated successes or failures with these selections, however, soon guide him in the formulation of standardized treatments. But the element of standardization is never rigidly applied, for it is perfectly acceptable to alter the ritual radically or substitute ingredients in the prescription to fit the particular case or pocket of the individual. These alterations may or may not be dictated by the spirit. It is quite acceptable for a healer to treat a disorder with entirely different methods on different occasions; or conversely, to treat dissimilar disorders with identical methods. It is very unusual for different healers to prescribe identical treatments for the same disorder.

Standardized therapy is, therefore, a secondary development arising out of repeated consultation with the spirits. Despite its incidence, it is considered a secondary way of deciding on the type of therapy to be applied. The predominant method is spirit-consultation, that is, "reading," and as previously seen in the discussion on modes of diagnosis, this is achieved primarily by methods of non-rational cognition.

In this article, the unorthodox healer has been recognized as a spiritual healer. He is, further, a folk-healer, but with certain significant qualifications.

Herb lore is widely known among the Jamaican peasantry; hence, the healer is not considered an indispensable consultant in complaints which can be treated with herbal medicine, that is, psycho-physiological disorders. He is, however, indispensable in matters of healing where the use of spirits or spirit-control is involved.

Secondly, the healer's clientele is further reduced among the folk population by the large segment who consider the power of spirits to be too innocuous to require specialized and elaborate treatment. These patronize healers only in emergencies.

This adulteration of the belief in the power of spirits fundamental to Jamaican folk religions is largely produced by the influence of other social institutions, such as organized religion, education, social class, and statute law.

The influence of education, notably in the field of medical science, is one of the most important modifying influences. Physicians are generally opposed to unorthodox healing, although they do not campaign against it, and some will even suggest that the patient try "other means" when medical aid seems impossible. The popularity of medical science among the folk people is limited by the following factors: the reluctance of physicians to give diagnoses which are meaningful to the people, when diagnoses are given at all; the lack of confidence of the people in the prescription of pills or medicines with pleasant flavors, which conflict with their customary belief in dark, bitter, and effervescent brews as the most effective medicines; and thirdly, in the rural areas, the medical fee of five to eight shillings per visit is two or three times as much as the healer's fee for simple healing rites. The elaborate preparations for a complex ritual such as a "table," however, cost many pounds, and in Kingston even the simpler rites are more expensive than medical attention, especially since free attention at Government hospitals is more readily available there.

The influence of organized religion is split between the nominal and the spiritual churches. Representatives of the latter group, such as the Church of God in Christ, accept unorthodox healing in principle and practice as a divine gift. Hence, they question cult healers only on theological points: the source of power, and the type of rituals. The nominal churches, which include the Church of England, the Methodist, and the Moravian churches, are traditionally opposed to healing primarily on the theological ground

that God invests no such power in man. Many folk people, however, subscribe both to healers and to one of the nominal churches, disregarding the conflict.

Statutory legislation also opposes unorthodox healing. The law is applied very sporadically, but when applied, conviction is almost assured. The healer, therefore, cannot risk a general advertisement of his services.

These are the major factors which limit the influence of the healer among the folk population of the island. Apart from this segment of the population, which constitutes the "lower" class, the healer receives little support from "upper" and "middle" class groups, since there is a definite social stigma attached to association with folk religion. It might be expected that this stigmatization would incite socially ambitious lower class members to oppose healing practices. Although this is sometimes true, it is minimized by the fact that the wide and distinct gap between lower and middle class groups in Jamaica discourages behavior aimed at improving social status. It is more generally true in rural communities, where a more homogenous class structure makes possible a somewhat higher degree of social mobility.

Naturally, the large number who are discouraged from patronizing unorthodox healers because of the social stigma, theological arguments, or any of the other reasons already outlined will seek medical attention, or, to a far lesser extent, herbal treatment. The unorthodox healer is, therefore, not the *only* source of healing aid in Jamaican folk society, but he is certainly one of the most influential ones.

The Tahitian witch doctor, aroused by a French planter, invoked traditional "ghosts-with-long-teeth."

TAHITI'S DEATH CURSE

Wilmon Menard

Break a taboo in Tahiti, and you will rue the day! The long chain of misfortunes attributed to violations of native *tapus* (sacred laws) has never been questioned in the Society Islands.

Although native sorcery and idol-worship have been suppressed by the colonial administration in French Oceania since 1840, there are still a small number of hereditary *tahuas* (witch doctors), who, in secrecy, practice this ancient art. Of the *tahuas* living today, Hiro-Tapu of Tautira, Tahiti, is the most famous in the isles of eastern Polynesia.

For more than seventy years, Hiro has ministered to the villagers of the southern end of Tahiti. He is now more than ninety years old, and he is descended from a long and respected line of famous witch doctors. With the use of hypnotism, strange incantations, and secret native medicines, he has won a wide reputation in the islands for his healing powers.

But the natives whisper that Hiro, although he now heals the villagers from various afflictions, once caused "ghosts-with-long-teeth" to devour the souls of those who incurred his disfavor.

Hiro, so the story goes, followed his peaceful and inoffensive calling of "country doctor," administering in the name of the god Rooteroroo, the healing-god of Polynesia, until a white man violated the strict *tapu* of his ances-

tors. Then he invoked the dread god of the islands—Nihonihoroa, the devouring vampire-ghost of Tahiti.

Hiro's transformation from a kindly Polynesian Dr. Jekyll to an evil Mr. Hyde began when a Frenchman bought the plantation next to his in Tautira. The plantation had been owned by Hiro's brother, but upon his death, his children, in urgent need, sold to the first buyer to appear at the Land Office in Papeete. This was a Frenchman from Marseilles.

The ancient burial ground, or *marae,* of Hiro's ancestors was on his brother's land. He called upon the Frenchman, asking permission to visit the place of interment. The new owner forbade Hiro to set foot on his property, and threatened him with dire consequences if he ever visited the plantation again.

Curses still ringing in his ears, Hiro dazedly hurried off, failing to comprehend the Frenchman's angry refusal of such a request. He began to visit the burial place at night, when the Frenchman was asleep.

It is a custom for relatives of dead persons to leave personal possessions on the foliage around graves—combs, mirrors, rings, necklaces, ribbons and gew-gaws —for use of the *faa-fano* (soul) in *Rohutu noa-noa,* the Tahitian heaven, or Fragrant Paradise. Hiro, during his stealthy, nocturnal visits to the *marae* of his ancestors, always left behind something for the spirits to use.

The Frenchman one day noticed the accumulation of articles on the bushes around the *marae,* and decided to investigate. One night he lay in wait nearby. Hiro appeared, and in a white heat of rage the Frenchman struck him to the ground, dragged him through the plantation and threw him into the shallow shore-waters of a lagoon. Hiro, almost senseless with pain, managed to drag himself laboriously home. The next day, the Frenchman, still incensed over Hiro's trespassing, knocked over the ancient basalt markers of the graveyard and threw them into the lagoon. He demolished the *marae* ground so that no trace of the original site remained.

Hiro left his village for five days. The third day of his mysterious disappearance, the Frenchman was afflicted

with a strange malady. He was undoubtedly in excruciating pain, for he thrashed wildly on his bed, foamed at the mouth, and uttered inarticulate, agonized cries. He was rushed to the French hospital in the village of Taravao, where doctors worked frantically over him. But the cause of his complaint could not be found, and the Frenchman died a raving maniac, crying to the last that "Ghosts are torturing me!"

After the Frenchman's death, Hiro once again walked along the main roads of Tahiti, a serene-faced Tahitian *Tahua,* curing in the compassionate name of the kindly ancient god, Rooteroroo.

Soon after this occurrence, a close friend of Hiro's, Timi, a native of Tautira, startled the white residents of Tahiti by baring secrets of the old witch doctor, which may or may not be the solution to the death of the rash Frenchman.

Timi declared that in a secluded valley of Tautira, Hiro had a *fare-tahutahu,* or sorcerer's temple. This temple, Timi said, was filled with *tiis* (idols or "fetchers"). Some of these were elaborately carved, others hewn crudely out of sacred wood from the ironwood, or *aito* tree, a taboo wood of Tahiti found near *maraes.* Still other idols were made from stone and coral in caricature human form, and dressed as miniature men and women in varied kinds of tapa cloth, which were fastened on with fine sennit, a plaited rope said to have magical qualities. Three of these *tiis,* or fetchers, Timi said, were figures of the offending Frenchman—in wood, stone, and coral.

In his temple, Hiro also had a bowl with a stone cover, and into this bowl Hiro had placed articles worn or handled by the Frenchman—a piece of shirt, a heel of a shoe, a wisp of hair, leavings of food and drink, and empty bottles. All this Hiro supposedly offered to the *Vaa-tii,* (assembly of fetchers), asking them to destroy the Frenchman.

In Tahiti and the outlying isles, there are many forms of avenging ghosts and spirits. Some assume image forms and can be seen and heard, according to the natives, even as they take possession of the doomed person. These are

called *tii-haere-taata* (spirit-fetchers-who-walk-like-man). Other ghosts are said to steal the soul and life of a person silently, entering his body through the ground on which he sits or stands. These are called *tii-motoe* (worm-wiggling-fetchers).

When ghosts take possession of a person, the Tahitians say, the symptoms of *pifao* (subtle-curse) cannot be mistaken. Terrible pains in the stomach are produced as the god of poison coral lacerates the victim's organs. The stone ghosts weigh down his soul, and those of the wood ghosts cut, pierce and push through his intestines. He suffers high fever, foaming at the mouth, madness—and always death.

According to the Tahitians, if this torture is not quickly stopped by a *tahua* who has a strong disenchanting power, the sufferer, writhing in agony, usually dies within a day or two. Generally, when a strong curse is cast, death comes to the victim within six or eight hours. It was under such circumstances that the Frenchman had died.

When brought before officials and questioned concerning his dabbling in black magic, Hiro answered none of their queries directly, but chanted a strange story of early Tahitian lore.

Hiro's chant, containing a hidden inference, was:

"After Taaroa, the highest God of the island, had given each god of his realm a duty to perform, the evil God of Darkness changed all of the souls that had come to him in death into ghosts, called *tupaupaus*. Those that remained always in the skulls of the deceased family members, kept in the sacred *marae* or altar, and not in torment, were good ghosts, and they did not harm anyone, but gave wise counsel to the families.

"Even the ghosts that roamed over the islands and returned to the Realm of Darkness in the morning were friendly and did no harm if their families received them politely. But the *tupaupaus* who were not welcomed were the bad Ghosts of Darkness. They had long teeth and hair, and they were the devouring Demons of Darkness, who waylaid, strangled, and ate the living people of the islands who violated *tapus*. The tahuas are the agents for

the *tupaupaus*, and at their bidding persons may be cursed by the evil ghosts and perish."

The natives of eastern Polynesia are undoubtedly the most "ghost-minded" in the world. Their ghosts assume many forms and shapes, according to legends handed down over hundreds of years.

The few animals, birds and insects native to Tahiti are thought by the natives to be the shadows of ghosts. The large brown species of rat common to Tahiti, is still regarded as the shadow of ghosts. When it creeps to the huts of the natives at night it is said to be relating tales of ancestral wars as it nibbles the thatch of the roofs and walls until daylight. But when the rat approaches a sick person, chattering shrilly, it is believed to be possessed with a devouring ghost, telling of the sure death of the ailing native.

The small species of owl that flies along the seashore of Tahiti at night for prey is believed to be an evil ghost of the Darkness. The *opea*, a small graceful swallow with black and purple feathers, is regarded as the peaceful ghost of the kind goddesses of the sky, always in flight to watch over the welfare of the natives of the islands.

The wild green fruit pigeon, which forever gives its terrifying cry of "Heo, heo, heo!" is regarded as the ghost of the goblin-woods. The *rupoe*, a small species of fruit pigeon which dwells in holes and between the rocks of the mountains, is believed to be the ghost of the mountain caves. The appearance of a *toreau*, or plover, is the forewarning of the coming of strangling demons; the gray plover is the disembodied spirit of the ghost of the water gods.

The *upoa* of the Society Islands, a small sea bird, is revered as the shadow of the ghosts of royalty. It can be found today only on the islands of Bora-Bora, Tahaa, and Moorea, adjacent to Tahiti, which were the ancient centers of royalty. This sea bird nests along the beaches, where it leaves its young in the warm sand until they are fledged. At night it flies near its nest in the ironwood trees, crying to its young. Its cry at first is low and eerie, like the mournful moaning of a human in pain, then it

rises higher to a piercing uncanny pitch, and, carried on the breezes, it sounds indeed like the cry of a tortured soul flying in space.

When the *upoa* gives its terrifying cry over the homes of royalty, it is the forewarning that some member of the family will die. In 1873, shortly before the death of Queen Pomare's grandchild, Pomareono, the moaning cry of the *upoa* was heard, and again when the Prince Consort Ariifaaite passed away. More recently, when the gargantuan Prince Hinoe, the adopted son of Pomare V, died, the *upoa* was heard calling in the night in the district of Arue, Tahiti, the home of the Pomare family.

All large trees of Tahiti, particularly the ironwood, surrounding altars and burial places, are the hiding place for ghosts, according to the natives, and from their branches are hewn the pagan idols of Polynesia. Odd-shaped stones, rolled upon the coral strands from the ocean, are believed to be bad ghosts of the sea in disguise and are promptly flung back again. White fishes are shadows of ghosts of natives who died at sea. The larger deep-sea creatures, such as shark, whale, devil-fish, congereels and man-eating rock-cods, are believed by the natives to be the gods of the sea themselves.

All insects are thought to be the clever agents of the gods. The cricket was in time of war a symbol of refuge. If invading warriors saw a cricket crawling before a village they would flee in panic, even leaping into the sea to escape the sound of its chirp, which was supposed to doom its hearers. All winds are, to the islanders, the strong whispers of the gods and ghosts, telling them of coming events.

The ruins of *maraes,* of burial grounds and altars, which are found today along the coasts of Tahiti and the outlying isles, are believed to be the natural gathering place for *tupaupaus*. Bodies of persons of high rank were first given interment behind the large stone slabs or under the pavings surrounding the *marae*. After the bodies had remained in the *marae* for a sufficient length of time to allow the ghosts to acquaint themselves with their new

home, they were removed by priests or chosen natives and carried to secret caves in the mountains.

On the high precipices of the Papehia Valley in the district of Hitiaa on Tahiti today are caves, like pigeonholes, where the warriors of ancient days, wrapped in sacred red tapa cloth, repose in splendid preserved condition. This hiding of the body was to guard against the possiblility of its being stolen by enemies, for it was believed that once an enemy possessed the head of a person, all the dead man's family and friends would be affected by the curse which would be exerted upon the skull.

The ancestral *marae* of the old Tahitian family, Vaituamataiteupoo-Tahiti, once located in the steep valley of Punaavia, was dedicated to the hero of the family, Tuatau. Some of the remains of the altar can be found today, and a strong *tapu* still clings to the locality. It is said that fire will not blaze in the vicinity of the old *marae,* and the natives dare not take firewood near this sacred spot.

Not far from the *marae* is a cave where the ghost of Tuatau is believed to stay. The natives attest that he appears often in the colorful garb of an ancient warrior, brandishing a long ironwood spear, challenging evil ghosts. Some of the present day descendants of the Vaituamataiteupoo-Tahiti family declare they constantly confer with Tuatau and that he advises them wisely as to their problems.

Sometimes, it is said, he leaves Tahiti for long periods, journeying by night to the Polynesian Valhalla in the volcano of Kilauea in the Hawaiian Islands, where the Tahitians and Hawaiians say the ghosts of the royal families meet to hold colorful ceremonies.

The sites of the *marae* and all their products are under a strict *tapu*. Disfigurement, calamity, and death are believed to visit those who disregard their sacredness.

During the reign of the last King of Tahiti, Pomare V, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, a white resident obtained the King's consent to buy the large ironwood trees which stood on the central cape of Papaoa, Tahiti, once the site of the national *marae* of Tarahoi, where the tomb of Pomare V stands today.

The news of the intended violation of this sacred ground spread like wildfire, and the natives pleaded with the white man not to desecrate this *tapu* place. The white man laughed at their warnings, chopped down the hard ironwood trees and converted the trunks and limbs into fine cabinet work. A few weeks following his depredation, he died, screaming in the last throes of an agonized death that ghosts were strangling him. The natives declared it to be a natural aftermath of his gross violation.

The sudden death of Fred W. Murnau, the German movie director who came to the islands to film his *Tabu,* is laid to a broken *tapu.* His violent death in an automobile collision in Santa Barbara, California, was believed by the natives to be a natural consequence of treading on the sacred islet of Motu-Tapu within the barrier reef of the island of Bora-Bora in the Leeward Group, and constructing his home above the burial ground of ancient Tahitian chiefs on Tainuu Point in the district of Punaavia, Tahiti.

Robert Keable, English author of *Simon Called Peter* and *Numerous Treasure,* was likewise cursed to a quick and strange death, according to Tahitians, by the avenging *tupaupau* or the warrior chief of Papeari, Tahiti, over whose grave the writer had erected his home.

On the island of Bora-Bora, an old native woman, Tuia-Vahine, one day lighted her cigarette from a burning faggot of the razed home of Queen Maevarua the First, which had always been held under a strong *tapu.* Tuia-Vahine suffered ectropion—that is, her eye-lids became inverted or turned inside out—and she died in agony.

Stranger is the curse that, it is said, once hung over the vault of the royal family in Vaitape, Bora-Bora, near Tahiti. No one save the immediate royal family could approach this vault without becoming ectropion and having his features horribly distorted. Rats and lizards which crawled over the vault were said to have been afflicted with this condition, and the natives killed any pigs, chickens or dogs that passed near the vault, as they also suffered ectropion by their trespassing.

For a long time on Bora-Bora, the descendants of Queen Maevarua the Second were the Keepers of the Royal Heirlooms, valuable feather cloaks and royal wreaths, but they dreaded to handle them since many servants had been rendered ectropion by touching them.

When Pomare V visited the Queen of Bora-Bora in Vaitape some years later, he was begged to burn the vault and heirlooms, so as to forever rid the island of the dread curse which made the natives ectropion. He agreed, and the vault and the royal heirlooms were destroyed by fire. But the curse has not left the locality of the vault so far as the natives are concerned and they still shun it today.

In one district in Paea, Tahiti, there is a large undersea cavern in the reef close to the beach, which is said to be the home of a large idol, called *Tii,* placed there when idol worship was suppressed by the Christian missionaries and the French administration in the early part of the nineteenth century. From this cave, the natives of Paea avow, a great phantom shape springs on still moonlight nights accompanied by a flash of lightning and a deafening clap of thunder. It strides swiftly across the Broom Road (the coast road of the island) and ascends to the highest peak of Paea, where, with a loud whistling noise heard for miles, it soars into the air and vanishes from sight.

A few moments after its disappearance, a wild gale bends the coco-palms far over and shakes the homes of the natives, who cower in fear. In this same locality, the apparitions of French soldiers killed by the natives of Paea in the early wars are frequently seen, according to natives, tramping along the road in full uniform.

A more recent "curse death" of the islands has caused the white residents to ponder again the power of *tapu.* Not long ago, a beachcomber named Pierre ransacked a cave of skeletons on Moorea, the island opposite Tahiti, to obtain money from the representative of a museum who was visiting Tahiti. Sometime afterward, Pierre was paddling in a canoe off Papetoai Bay, Moorea. His canoe was mysteriously upset in a calm sea, and Pierre was

killed by a monstrous shark. The natives declared, in accordance with Tahitian beliefs, he had been punished by Tuahatu, the Shark God, for his violation of the *tapus* of Moorea.

Donkeys, dogs, moths, bats, horses, and birds perform supernatural acts in the West Indies.

PSYCHIC ANIMALS OF THE CARIBBEAN

Grace N. Isaacs

THE PHANTOM PIG

I lived in Montego Bay after my marriage in 1914, where I heard the story then current among Montegonians of all classes of a phantom pig that sometimes paraded the town at night and battered at house doors and gates. I smiled at these stories and wondered at persons who should have known better giving credence to such nonsense.

In 1916 we returned to the town after living for a year on property five miles from Montego Bay. We were told that "the pig" was then disturbing householders and that several persons had professed to having been annoyed by it.

Our household at the time consisted of my husband, a young brother K., and a younger sister G. We all began to notice shortly after we returned that each night between eleven and twelve o'clock all the dogs in town started in a pack from the top of our street in pursuit of an animal that squealed and grunted breathlessly like a hog.

My own remark was, "It's a shame that anyone should keep hogs in the town."

Our house was so situated that we stepped straight into the street from the door. One night my husband and I had gone upstairs and he had just lit the gas when we heard a pack of dogs rushing down the street and barking in perfect frenzy.

K. grabbed a lantern and called to G. to go out with him to find out what was being chased.

I looked through the windows while the younger people stood outside. The four of us saw the howling dogs preceded by horrid sounds as of a pursued hog—but we saw no creature.

Since we could hardly credit the testimony of our own eyes and ears, we did not mention the occurrence to anyone. A few nights later we were all in bed when the dog pack raced by the house and faded into the distance. Later on we heard thudding and battering at the small wooden door which opened from the passage alongside our house onto the street.

The dogs howled and snarled in the street. Then the squealing, squawking, and grunting grew louder until it seemed transformed into the screams and groans of a man in mortal agony. The horrid sounds continued, yet the dogs never seemed to get their teeth into anything. We could see nothing to account for the phenomenon.

The following morning we questioned the owner of the house next door and asked if she had heard anything. "Yes," she said, "we heard the pig screaming and battering at your door, but we made no move, as we did not wish to be the next to be molested."

Neighbors opposite had also heard, they said, but believing it to be "the pig," had decided to remain in bed.

After this we made many enquiries, and though there were many who had heard "the pig," we could find no one who had seen it.

THE LAMENT OF THE CATTLE

Eighty years ago Mr. H. was the owner of a large cattle property in Trelawny. He seemed to have an almost personal affection for his animals and was unwilling to leave them in the care of an overseer.

Mr. H. fell ill and died rather suddenly. In those Victorian times there were no hearses and the custom was to remove the hood from the horse-drawn carriage and place the coffin on the seats.

The drive from the great house to the gate of the property was long, and on the day of burial a large group of mourners had gathered. First came the carriage bearing the coffin, then the rest of the cortege, each carriage and horse being hung with black crepe.

The mourners were startled suddenly when the silence was broken by the moaning and bellowing of the cattle. The animals walked up from the surrounding pastures and arranged themselves in long lines on either side of the fence parallel with the carriages.

In the mile-long drive to the gate the weird scene continued as the solemn line of black-hooded carriages was escorted by wild-eyed cattle, pawing the ground, flourishing their tails, and tossing their horned heads as they lamented in agonizing tones so different from their normal gentle lowing.

THE PERSISTENT CATS

The Reverend R., an Australian who lived in Jamaica, had occasion to reprimand a member of his congregation for having traffic with the obeah man. The man did not take it kindly and reported the minister's words to the obeah man. Whereupon the latter sent a message to the minister saying that he had "put puss 'pon him."

The minister was very amused, told the messenger to say that he never in his life had been scared by nonsensical threats and "Puss or no puss" he would not be prevented from doing his duty. He noticed, however, some short time after this that he seldom walked the streets of the village without finding a cat following at his heels. If he visited friends or a member of his congregation, a cat would jump on the arm of his chair.

On the last occasion before the nuisance abated, he preached for a minister in another parish, and a cat found its way into the pulpit and perched itself on the spot where the minister would have placed his notes.

It refused to be driven away and the verger at last had to remove it bodily.

THE HAUNTED TERRIER

Mr. B. is senior and confidential clerk in a large and important mercantile house in Kingston. In 1951 he built a house in the foothills of the Blue Mountains.

The house is built on an excavated plateau of the mountainside and the garden is bounded by a massive parapet beyond which is a sheer drop to the valley.

Mrs. B. has a pet terrier which she lets out every night for a run before retiring.

Shortly after moving into the new home the dog began to behave in a most unusual manner. At about ten o'clock every evening the usually mild animal would begin to bristle as with anger and dash barking about the living room. After a while he would stand with front paws on the low window sill and become so frenzied while looking outside that he had to be prevented from jumping out.

One bright moonlight night Mr. B. looked through the window while the pet was going through his nightly performance and was surprised to see a large misty-grayish dog walking on the parapet as if in slow motion.

He made no comment to his wife as she has always been very uneasy about anything paranormal.

Some nights later a young Canadian teacher-clergyman and his wife visited. The terrier began his act and Mr. B. suggested that it be let out into the garden. When this was done there ensued noises which sounded very much as if the animal had gone mad. Mrs. B., fearing that her pet was being attacked, ran down and tried to hold the dog. Mr. B. and his friend stood at the window.

Mr. B. asked him if he saw anything. "Yes," he replied. "I see a large phantomlike creature looking like a very big gray dog creeping slowly along the parapet."

They called to Mrs. B. and asked if she saw anything to account for the terrier's rage. She replied, "No, there is nothing at all in sight, but you will have to help me to hold him as I can hardly prevent him from jumping the parapet and he may go over it."

THE DYING BATS

In 1913 my father was the Methodist minister in Falmouth. We lived in a beautiful old eighteenth-century Georgian house, bounded on two sides by the street.

My father had a habit of leaving the family each evening at about 8:30 and resting in bed while he read for an hour or so. One night we heard him call to my mother. She went to him and immediately called us into their large bedroom. There we saw my father lying on his bed with dozens of bats wheeling over his head, while numbers of others in the room seemed to struggle to get near to him. Not one of them touched him, but as soon as they were about two feet from him, each dropped dead. As fast as they died, others took their places.

An occasional bat was not unknown in this old house, and we suggested that he leave the lighted room. He moved first into the hall, then into another bedroom, and finally into the drawing room. The creatures followed along wherever he went. When the dead bats were counted, they numbered well over one hundred.

On the following Sunday my father preached at one of his churches several miles from Falmouth. At the eleven o'clock morning service, as soon as he entered the pulpit, a large number of bats came circling out around him, each falling dead in turn.

THE BLACK MOTH

B. had a new cushion in her sitting room and on entering the room one morning she saw on it an enormous ugly black moth with outspread wings. She went up and held the cushion to drive it off. The creature seemed to dive into the mass of the cushion and disappear and careful search never revealed it again.

THE BUTTERFLY

My bedroom used to open into that of my daughter. One evening in 1936 I was resting on my bed while she

was busy in her room. Her light was on and I noticed that she kept peering under the bed, then on the bed and behind it.

Suddenly I saw a very large and brilliant butterfly flutter heavily above the bedside carpet.

"There it is," I called and as she too caught sight of it, it appeared to dive beneath the carpet, which lay flat on the floor. When she lifted the carpet there was nothing to be seen under it.

THE CHAINED DONKEY

In 1896 Mr. P. was a young man and a fearless agnostic. He lived with his mother and uncle on their Westmoreland property and often traveled from one parish to another in the interest of their cattle-raising industry.

On one of these journeys he decided to take an unaccustomed road in order to visit a friend. It was a bright moonlight night and he rode along leisurely.

Eventually he arrived at a crossroad, where he saw a small donkey in an open field beside the road. It was tethered by a shining steel chain as heavy as a large ship's anchor cable. To add to his surprise, the creature was making a weird crunching noise as if it were eating large stones. He tried to rein in his horse in order to better observe the phenomenon, but the horse reared and took to its heels in a frenzy of fright.

He finally reached the home of his friend, who immediately noticed the lather on the horse, its state of trembling fright, and the rider's perturbed face.

The friend then asked if the horse had shied at sight of the "duppy donkey." Mr. P. told his tale and asked for more information. He was told that many people from the village had seen this chained ghost animal which appeared to eat stones. It was visible only on moonlight nights, and he was told that if he had been able to wait a little longer it would have disappeared from sight.

East meets West on the level of psychic expericence when an American couple visits Bombay and "remembers" an old house and tree—perhaps from an earlier incarnation.

CRUISE MEMORY

William Chapman White

Since the death of his wife five years ago, Mr. James, a retired businessman, spends his winters on cruises. Sometimes he takes a series of short trips, sometimes he goes round the world. Following a round-the-world cruise this past winter he turned up in Manhattan with a story:

Most of the people on such cruises, Mr. James said, are much alike. They have money and time on their hands. All they talk about is their shipmates or their gallbladder ailments or how they bought General Motors at thirty. At each port they rush ashore madly to buy everything in sight, then come back to the boat to tell how much better their home town is than any foreign city.

That's why the Bralorne couple stood out on this cruise. They were an elderly couple from some Midwest town. They neither had the money to spend on shore shopping nor the interest. Instead, they read avidly on every stopping place. They were the first ashore at every stop, not to visit the shops but to see everything there was to be seen. Their son—he had some funny name—had done well, so they told me, and had given them this cruise as a fortieth wedding anniversary present. It was a pleasure to talk with them for they looked on everything with fresh childish wonder.

The ship came into Bombay for a two-day stop. I felt a bit indisposed and I'd been there before so I didn't even

go ashore. That's why I was on deck on the afternoon of the second day and saw the Bralornes come back, long before the ship was to sail. Usually they were the last aboard. I thought they looked a little pale and assumed the heat had gotten them, for it was blisteringly hot. It wasn't until some days later, when we were headed up through the Mediterranean, that Bralorne told me what had happened. I suppose he had to tell some one to check on his sanity.

"Never having been out of America before," he said, "obviously I'd never seen Bombay, but as soon as we landed I had a strange feeling. As my wife and I started to walk the streets I said, 'When we round that corner we'll come to the Afghan church' and, a little later, 'Two streets down and we'll find De Lisle Road.'

"My wife gave me a funny look and said, 'You certainly know your way around. Or maybe you also feel that you've been here before?'

"I was astonished at that. It was precisely what I did feel. I cannot tell you how our bewilderment grew during the day. We went around the city as if we had known every street and every old building all our lives or in some other life. We were a puzzled pair when we returned to the ship at the end of that day. We both agreed that we seemed to know Bombay in far greater detail than we could ever have picked up from any books.

" 'We can test that,' my wife said. 'Tomorrow we'll look for that house—the one that had a huge banyan tree in the front garden.'

"I nodded. I, too, could remember an old house at the foot of Malabar Hill and I could recall many details. We set out directly to the place the next day. We were both relieved when we saw no trace of any private house there —only some rather imposing apartments.

" 'I guess it was all imagination,' my wife said.

"I don't know why but I went up to an elderly policeman who was standing near by. I asked him if he knew whether a large private house had ever stood on that site.

"He said: 'One of the great houses of the city once stood there, sir. It was torn down ninety years ago but I

heard about it from my father—as a boy he was a servant in the house.'

"I heard my wife's voice tremble as she asked: 'Would you know if a giant banyan tree was in the front garden?'

"The policeman nodded. 'I heard about that, too, for it was one of the largest ever grown—hundreds of years old. I remember my father telling how the old owner of the house cried when it was cut down. After all, the house and its gardens had been in his family for hundreds of years and he was the last of his line. His was a famous family here once, the Bhan family.'

"I felt my wife waver slightly. We hurried back to the ship, almost sick in bewilderment. We have racked our brains but—!"

Mr. James reassured him. "You probably read more about Bombay than you realized."

"Perhaps," Bralorne said. "But when our son was born we gave him an unusual name. At the time it seemed most fitting and we both assumed we'd seen it in some book or other. Our son was baptized Bhan Bralorne."

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IN NEW ZEALAND

the death certificate of a woman read "bronchial asthma." But neighbors saw invisible hands choke the breath from her body—killed by *makutu*, the dreaded Maori sorcery.

IN CEYLON

hideously masked devil dancers screamed and writhed around the body of a catatonic young girl—as they restored her long-lost sanity.

IN POLYNESIA

a white man joined native fire-walkers to tread barefoot on burning coals—and emerged completely unscathed.

From China to the Amazon, New Zealand to Nigeria, here are recorded cases of striking "magical" powers that defy human reason and physical laws —proof that ancient societies have penetrated the dark knowledge of mankind's strangest science, ESP.

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